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DAVID FRIEDRICH STRAUSS

DAVID FRIEDRICH STRAUSS

IN

HIS LIFE AND WRITINGS

24403

BY

EDUARD ZELLER

AUTHORISED TRANSLATION

WITH A PORTRAIT

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DAVID FRIEDRICH STRAUSS.

PREFACE.

IMMEDIATELY AFTER the death of the man to whose memory the following pages are dedicated, I was requested by the Editor of the 'Swabian Mercury' to write a necrology on him for that journal. This I promised to do, only stipulating to be allowed a somewhat longer time, as other duties prevented me from undertaking it immediately. When, however, I proceeded to the execution of the task, during the last Easter vacation, I became speedily convinced that I could not keep my narrative, without incurring my own utter dissatisfaction with it, either in substance or extent, within the limits involved by its appearance in a daily journal. I therefore resolved to design it at once on a larger scale, and to comprise in it more than was

compatible with its original object. The present memoir is the result.

It is not intended to present a biography, but a biographical delineation; not a finished picture, but a preliminary sketch. In order to write the biography of such a man as Strauss, I should have required far more complete material and far more leisure than stood at my disposal at the present time. Moreover, the history of a life cannot be fully delineated until that life is so far removed from the present that the persons and the circumstances which influenced its course can be openly discussed on all sides without wounding the legitimate feelings and considerations of others. Even where no such scruples existed, distinct limits were imposed on my work by its whole plan and by the little time which I could bestow upon it. Much that I could have added I was obliged to withhold, because it would have too much disturbed the harmony of the whole. I have been obliged to pass over in silence, or with slight allusions, persons who stood in close connection with Strauss, and personal relations which he

valued; for a narrative on a larger scale would alone have afforded sufficient scope to make the general reader acquainted with these persons and to render their relations intelligible to him. The principal figure moreover could not stand out with perfect distinctness if it were surrounded in its narrow framework by too many subordinate figures; who would likewise require to be treated with a certain amount of care in order to render them recognisable.

The basis of the following biography has been formed chiefly from my personal recollections, in addition to Strauss's works and a few published notices respecting him. These recollections extended over the greater part of Strauss's life; for I had known him even before he had left the University. Soon afterwards I had him as a teacher, and for several years I lived under the same roof with him; and from that period I kept up an intimacy with him which, from time to time, as our places of abode allowed of it, was revived by shorter or longer meetings. In addition to this, I have had the perusal of more than two hundred letters, extending from the end of

the year 1835 to the last weeks of my friend's life. Where these sources have proved insufficient (which, however, was on the whole but rarely the case) I have gathered information from those who were in intercourse with him at different periods. A valuable completion to my own knowledge of him has, lastly, been afforded me by Strauss's own records of his life and by the poems which in the course of my work have been most kindly sent to me by his children.

From these aids I venture to hope that I have been sufficiently informed upon the subject I have undertaken, and that, much as this sketch is lacking in completeness, it is at any rate guarded from errors of any importance.

THE AUTHOR.

BERLIN : *May* 1, 1874.

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LIFE AND WRITINGS

OF

DAVID FRIEDRICH STRAUSS.

CHAPTER I.

BOYHOOD.

THE Swabian race has at all times, and especially during the last century, been associated with the intellectual life of the German people. During this period it has produced a grand succession of scholars and artists, of poets and thinkers, whose name and influence have far exceeded the limits of their narrow home, and not unfrequently those of the German language. But not many of these are to be compared in endowments and historical importance with the man, the portrait of whose life and character we shall sketch in the fol-

lowing pages. By his striking theological works, even as a young man, David Friedrich Strauss called forth a movement which not merely is still to be felt in this branch of science, but which had also a decided effect upon the philosophy and general culture of our own day. He subsequently enriched the history of literature, both in and out of Germany, with a considerable number of intellectual biographies, profoundly conceived and finely finished. In the second revision of his 'Life of Jesus,' fundamentally adhering to his earlier views, he brought to a final result the thirty years' labour of that German criticism on the Gospels to which he had himself given the impetus.

In his last work, which attracted such great attention, he not only combined his earlier critical labours into one artistic work insurpassable in its kind, but he also ventured, in express opposition to that which is regarded by most as unapproachable truth, to sketch the fundamental outline of a new theory of life more in harmony with the natural and historical knowledge of the present day, and with the present condition of thought; and in

so doing, at all events, whatever opinion we may hold as to the defensibility of his views, he raised questions, expressed ideas, and started problems, which will long furnish the profound investigator with a stimulant, and with matter for serious reflection.

But he did still more than this. He gave the world the living example of a man who, impelled by inextinguishable thirst for truth, never ceased to seek and to strive; whose development never paused, and was never lulled by the ease of possession and enjoyment; whom no authority deterred from examination and enquiry, and from candidly expressing without fear and secondary considerations whatever he discovered; who regarded it as the true vocation of his life to destroy prejudices, to prove the weakness of the shibboleths of time and parties, and to bring men from words to things, from indefinite ideas to distinct conceptions and certain observations; but at the same time of a man who valued mental culture still more than knowledge, and who, with the most extensive learning, and the widest interest in nature and humanity, sought above all for unity with

himself, for the harmony and perfection of his inner life, and for the pure, undisturbed, and thorough development of his mental individuality.

This it was which caused not the least part of the attractive power and success of Strauss's writings. His readers felt that in him they had not to do merely with the scholar, the thinker, and the master in expression and language, but at the same time ever with the man himself. They found themselves, even in his strictly scientific works, and far more in his popular writings, brought face to face with a peculiar and richly cultivated being, and drawn into intimate communion with him; they felt themselves always excited and interested, always in excellent society; and this charm of personal intercourse with the clever and attractive author was with difficulty resisted by cultivated minds, even when they shrank from the two-edged critic, and crossed themselves in the presence of the heretic. Yet, for the same reason, his writings, however apparently, as objective works of art, they may have separated themselves from the person of their author, stand for

ever in such close connection with him, that much in them cannot be fully understood and enjoyed unless to a certain extent we are acquainted with him.

Strauss was born on January 27, 1808, at Ludwigsburg, the same town in which his friends Justinus Kerner, Eduard Mörike, and Friedrich Vischer first saw the light; and to this his native city he clung with faithful attachment throughout his life. It afforded him moreover truly much that could fascinate the boy, and that could make the man look back to it from afar gratefully and longingly. It was not alone the paternal house and garden, the fresh air and the splendid playgrounds afforded by the broad streets and avenues of the secluded town and park, but he also enjoyed that comfortable limitation of burgher circumstances in which during the early years of life the development of mind and body thrives, as a rule, far better and more healthily than amid the noise and distractions of a capital. In addition to this, it possessed a school which, according to the requirements of the period, satisfied the demands for education up to

fourteen years of age. And as Ludwigsburg was not only the principal garrison town of the country, but also since its foundation had been, with the adjacent Stuttgart, the residence of its princes, it enjoyed so much connection with public life, so much direct interest in the traditions of Karl Alexander, who was said to have wrung off the Devil's neck in the Ludwigsburg Palace, and of 'Herzog Karl,' of Schubart and Schiller, and other personages of more modern Würtemberg history, and such a view of the movements which the great period of the Napoleonic wars, and subsequently the Würtemberg constitutional struggles produced, that the boy's eye was not likely to be too much occupied by petty and narrow concerns.

The class to which Strauss belonged, and in which he grew up, was, generally speaking, that of the higher bourgeoisie, such as frequently existed at that period in a small south German town, lying somewhat remote from intercourse with the world. But while he had inherited from his parents an individuality of a peculiar stamp, there was also in his paternal home no lack of impressions and in-

fluences, which gave a peculiar turn to its development. His father was a retail merchant, whose outward position would have been good enough had he not, from unfavourable circumstances and his own mistakes, experienced losses which sensibly affected the comfort of the family and the tone of the house. With his fine talents and good education he would probably have fared better in some scholarly vocation than in an industrial one. Besides reading the more modern poets, he studied his Horace, Ovid, and Virgil in the original; and when he went into the country he delighted in sitting alone in the inn-garden with one of these classic authors in his hand. He had, as his son proudly states, an innate ability for written compositions of all kinds; he was moreover not without talent for poetry; he devoted more time to the cultivation of fruit and the rearing of bees than was good for his business, and in his leisure moments he was absorbed in the mysticism of Stilling's 'Grauen Mann.' In one word, he possessed a predominantly contemplative nature, inclined to intellectual interests; he was good-hearted, but his temper was irritable, quick,

and passionate; and in the commercial dealings of his retail trade, in which moreover he took but little pleasure, he was not always so courteous towards his customers as others of his class were.

Strauss's mother was a distinguished woman in her way, and he has himself depicted her affectionately in a charming little sketch.[1] Small and delicate in appearance, a simple, homely, and contented nature, thoroughly healthful in her judgment and feeling, cheerful, kindly, and full of good humour; keenly susceptible of all natural beauty, possessing a ready appreciation for all that was naïve and popular, and yet not excluded from higher intellectual interests; in matters of religion just as decidedly inclined to practical, comprehensible, and rational views as her husband was to belief in dogmas and mysticism. A thorough housewife, a loving, judicious, and, when necessary, even severe mother; a faithful and wise counsellor in difficulty to a husband not very manageable at all times, she was the good spirit of her home, and her grateful son confesses that to her he owed the best that was

[1] Kl. Schr. N.F., 233 *et seq.*

in him. From her he not merely inherited the oval and finely-cut countenance which pleased and attracted at the first glance, with its nobly arched brow, and large, intelligent, and dark brilliant eyes; in his mental physiognomy also we cannot fail to perceive the likeness to his mother. The clear mind, the delight in learning and the iron memory, which he points out in her, were not the only things in which he resembled her: fineness of feeling, free, cheerful humour, an appreciation of all that was simple and natural, a capability of entering lovingly into the imagination of the people, of little children, and of the unlearned, a sensible apprehension of life, and the realistic bent of his nature, all this he had in common with her.

Nor was an admixture of the qualities of his father at the same time lacking. The impetuous temperament and the energetic will of his father had also been transmitted to him; the readiness in expressing himself in writing, which he extols in his father, became in him a perfect art; the literary and æsthetic inclinations of the one became in the other extensive study and a

fine understanding of literature, poetry, the plastic arts, and even of music, for which he originally possessed less natural genius. While the father occasionally produced a successful attempt at versification, the son has left us not merely a collection of charming little poems, a few specimens of which we shall presently mention, but he has never written anything, large or small (as he himself remarks in one of his notes), in which the poet within him was not of use to him. While the one would have been led by natural inclination to a career of learning, the other found in science the task of his life and his historical vocation. Even the mystical tendencies of his father were not, as we shall find, alien to him; only that to the one they presented a mere period of transition, while to the other, less favoured by natural endowments and by educational advantages, they proved a permanent condition.

Strauss was the third child of his parents; the two elder ones, a girl and a boy, had died before he was born. The latter he resembled greatly both in character and appearance, and even the name of the child, Fritz, devolved

upon him; he himself, however, subsequently always signed his name in full, David Friedrich. Of his two younger brothers, only the one next him in age survived; he was afterwards a manufacturer in Cologne, and died in 1863 from heart disease of long standing. An oration to his memory was written by his brother,[1] which warmly and eloquently delineates the solidity of his character, the freedom of his mind, his serious interest in the deepest subjects of enquiry, and the strength of his mind under his heavy suffering. Our Strauss, as his schoolfellow Vischer tells us,[2] was a somewhat weakly and delicately formed child, and was therefore excluded from the wilder play of his companions; and even at an early period, in quieter and more thoughtful amusements, his intellectual quickness and poetic imagination became apparent. At school, the same authority informs us, his vocation as a scholar betrayed itself in ready power of comprehension, in an excellent memory, and in conscientious

[1] Kl. Schr. N.F., 341 *et seq.*

[2] 'Krit. Gänge,' i. 84, in the sketch written in 1838, *Strauss and the Würtembergers;* a paper which has now acquired a fresh interest.

industry. It was therefore only an empty boast when subsequently one of the teachers of his boyhood, who lived to see the fame of his pupil, claimed to himself the merit of having laid the foundation of his future greatness by plentiful castigations.

In his fourteenth year, in the autumn of 1821, Strauss was placed in the lower Evangelical seminary at Blaubeuren, one of those schools which were founded in Würtemberg in the sixteenth century in former monasteries for the education of future theologians, and which therefore, even at the present day, are still called monasteries. There are four of these schools, and according to the regulation of that period—a regulation recently altered—the youths spent the four years intervening until their admission to the University in the same 'monastery' which they had entered at fourteen. Living together in one building, carefully superintended in their work and behaviour, their education in the ordinary branches of school learning is conducted by the ephori of the seminary, two professors, and two younger men, who, under the name of *repetenten* (ushers), are entrusted with the

immediate supervision of the pupils. Strauss has himself given a lively description of the life and doings in the Blaubeuren seminary in his biography of Märklin. It was fortunate for him that this course of study and this establishment fell to his lot. Besides the beautiful situation of the little town in the Blauthal, lying on the southern declivity of the Swabian Alb, two miles from Ulm, the hospitable kindness of its inhabitants indemnified the scholars to a certain extent for absence from home and the restraint of the still somewhat monastic discipline; but the main thing was, that among the fifty youths who were here passing together such a long and decisive portion of their life there were an unusual number of capable and even remarkably gifted minds, and of quick, witty, and assiduous characters;[1] and that the most important branches of education were placed in the hands of two men such as the Professors Kern and Baur, who so happily supplied each other's deficiencies, and who, each in his own way, was so thoroughly equal to his vocation. Both of

[1] Cf. the names and characteristics given by Strauss himself in 'Märklin,' 21 *et seq.*

these subsequently, soon after Strauss's departure from Blaubeuren, joined the Faculty of Divinity at Tübingen, where he again had them as teachers, and from one of them, the famous founder of the 'Tübingen School,' he received the most lasting influence. Classic literature and ancient history held the foremost place in the studies of the scholars, and into the spirit of these the ready mind of the pupil was initiated by his teacher; and by means of them love for the ideal, desire for truth, and a taste for the beautiful and the great, were awakened and fostered within him.

CHAPTER II.

COLLEGE LIFE.

STRAUSS is among those in whom this seed-time produced the richest fruit. The four years at Blaubeuren were altogether of the utmost importance for the development of his mind. When he went there he was a shy boy, frightened at the noisy doings of his schoolfellows, and for the first few weeks he was a prey to home-sickness. When in the autumn of 1825, upon his admission into the Evangelical Theological College at Tübingen, he entered the University, he had ripened into a youth who, with all his merriment and amiability, unmistakably inspired both companions and teachers with respect; and though at first certainly, as Vischer says, no one would have foreseen the future critic in the proud overgrown youth, yet perhaps a deeper discerner of human nature would

have perceived the predisposition for such a career in the severe scientific work, in the independence of judgment, in the intellectual originality, and in the decision of character, which distinguished him even during his student life.

According to the regulations at that time existing with regard to the pupils of the Evangelical College at Tübingen, two full years were devoted to philosophical, philological, and historical studies, and three more to those of an exclusively theological character. Strauss and his friends, however, had not here the same good fortune in philosophy that they had enjoyed at Blaubeuren. He himself tells us in his 'Märklin' (p. 31 *et seq.*) how much they suffered from the dry character of the instruction bestowed upon them. As regards philosophy especially, the main subject of their present studies, they found themselves here predominantly thrown upon their own resources; and it was then principally Schelling who attracted Strauss, like most others, most strongly, and inspired him with enthusiasm. This bias was all the more natural, as at the same time romantic poetry, the twin sister of

Schelling's natural philosophy, was exercising a magic influence over him. Repelled by the noise of ordinary student life, treating its illusions coldly and ironically, he had attached himself to a small circle of friends of poetic gifts and tastes, adherents of the romanticists, who raved with youthful enthusiasm for Novalis and Tieck, who ridiculed all that was low and common, and fabricated a wonderful mythology of their own, unknown and unintelligible to all others; whose labours, however, we must not too lightly estimate, since they have produced such charming results as 'Mörike's Poems.' With Mörike especially Strauss remained in close intimacy till his death; and he valued him no less as an amiable man overflowing with the wittiest humour, than as a poet whose songs bear comparison with few others in the whole range of German poetry, in purity of poetic tone, tenderness of feeling, and beauty of language. At that time he resigned himself entirely to the romanticist bias. He also successfully took part in the poetic attempts of his friends; and had not his other natural powers preponderated over his poetic gifts,

and prevented him from treating poetry otherwise than as an ornamental adjunct of his life, and induced him to use it in his literary labours only in combination with other elements, he would undoubtedly have won an esteemed name also as a poet.[1]

[1] I have already mentioned the poems which Strauss left behind in manuscript. Some of those written during his last illness will be subsequently inserted. In order, however, to furnish an evidence from the earlier period of his life in proof of the opinion just stated, I will here insert a song which to my own mind may be compared in its melodious simplicity with the most perfect productions of the kind which we possess, whilst at the same time it affords us a glimpse of Strauss' tender relations towards his father and his paternal home, and of his delicate appreciation of nature.

THE LINDEN TREE.

Oh linden scent, oh linden tree !
Like childhood's dream ye come to me,
No dream without ye made.
Oh linden trees I love ye so ;
My father's house stood long ago
Beneath a lime tree's shade.

In summer when the lindens bloom,
How busily the bees will come
And seek the honied store.
My father took delight in bees ;
Hence, like a heritage these trees
Are sacred all the more.

The lime tree's shadow makes the wine,
And e'en a kiss too, doubly fine,
From childish lips when given.
Father, I bring this glass to thee ;
Thou lik'st not, 'neath the linden tree,
To sit with nought at even.

He was soon, however, led by his romanticist taste still further into mystic belief and superstition, and this to a degree which we should be perhaps inclined to doubt, had he not himself informed us of the fact in his well-known graceful delineation of Justinus Kerner.[1] He there tells us that at the beginning of his University career he could not acquire any taste at all for Kant, and could not understand his problems, but that, on the other hand, he warmly embraced Schelling's intellectual opinions and also Jacobi's philosophy of feeling; that he soon ranked Jakob Böhme even above Schelling, and placed as firm a belief in his sayings as he had hitherto done in the Bible, revering in them, indeed, a more deep and direct revelation than in the latter: that with three friends he took a journey to a fortune-teller, and on the way made the acquaintance of a shepherd who performed a wonderful cure on one of the party; that he was absorbed in Kerner's history of two somnambulists, and that subsequently (it seems to have been in the Easter vacation of 1827) he visited the remarkable man himself at his

[1] 'Zwei friedliche Blätter.' Altona, 1839, p. 10, *et seq.*

charming residence at Weinsberg, and formed a friendly intimacy not only with him, but with his pleasing and agreeable wife, whom Kerner subsequently made known to the world as the 'Propheteess of Prevorst.'

We are inclined to enquire how it could be that the mystic fanatic of that period should become in a few years the cuttingly keen and unmerciful critic which Strauss appears to us in his 'Life of Jesus'? Any one, however, who is more closely acquainted with the history of the religious mind, knows that very frequently mysticism both in individuals and in ages has proved the transition from belief in established authorities to the independent examination of transmitted tradition; and those who have more deeply penetrated into its nature will perceive in this form of belief, alien as it is to us, only one of the many pupa-changes through which thought passes, before its wings are sufficiently matured for freer flights.

But in order to reach this independent position, Strauss required a guide, and this he found in the first place in Schleiermacher. To his emancipating influence it was due that he

did not linger longer than was good for him in the twilight of romantic dreamland, in the vague depths of theosophy and amid the alluring visions of somnambulism. And Schleiermacher, especially at that time, was better adapted than any other to render him this service. As a philosopher, his pantheism aroused confidence in the disciple of Schelling; as a theologian, he met the religious devotee and mystic with his Christian knowledge; as an author, he attracted the romanticist by the æsthetic form of his discourses and soliloquies; whilst at the same time, with the acuteness of his logic, he severed the threads, one after another, which had hitherto bound the mind of his disciple to unproved hypotheses and indistinct ideas. 'One bit of reflective matter after another,' says Strauss, 'found its way unobserved into our consciousness, and before we were aware of it, we were standing on a wholly new mental soil, from whence, looking back on the old fairy-land of clairvoyance, magic, and sympathy, everything appeared inverted.' In another unpublished retrospect of his mental development, he remarks that it was only now on

first discovering in himself the gift of dialectic thought, that he was conscious of a genuine bias and true passion for study; it was only from this period that he really learned, but that from henceforth he made the most rapid progress.

An evidence of this change of views, and a renunciation of his former belief in the wonders of somnambulism, appears in a criticism which Strauss wrote for the 'Hesperus' in 1830,[1] upon the various opinions on Kerner's 'Prophetess of Prevorst,' which had meanwhile appeared; yet he still concedes more with respect to that belief than he would certainly have done subsequently. His friendly relation with Kerner was, however, only transiently disturbed by it; and even afterwards, when Strauss directed his criticism against far more important articles of faith, the friendship of the two men was in no wise injured;

[1] This paper is now published in his 'Characteristics and Critics,' p. 390 *et seq.* This criticism, and a discourse delivered by Strauss as a member of the Tübingen College, at the secular celebration of the anniversary of the Augsburg Confession on June 25, 1830, were the first things of Strauss that were published. The discourse is to be found in the description of the celebration published by the Tübingen Theological Faculty.

and as long as he lived at Heilbronn, he remained on terms of the closest and pleasantest intimacy with his marvel-loving neighbour at Weinsberg. Where such a belief appeared so simple, and combined with so many excellencies, as in Kerner, it was not difficult to Strauss to tolerate it; and, on the other hand, Kerner possessed such large and warm-hearted humanity, he was so entirely devoid of all the characteristics of a fanatic, though opposed to Strauss' views he was so sure of the soundness of his heart, and he himself, without knowing it, had such a strong sceptical vein within him, in the humour with which he regarded the world and trifled with it, that the sincerity and warmth of this friendship between the hyper-orthodox man and the supposed infidel cannot entirely surprise us. Strauss himself alluded to it in the above-mentioned article in the Hall Journals, and after Kerner's death in the funeral oration which was transferred from the 'Swabian Mercury' to the 'Kleine Schriften.'[1]

It was not, however, merely this one separation from Strauss' former circle of ideas

[1] N.F., 298 *et seq.*

which was involved in his breach with romanticism, but when once this crisis in thought had been reached, it necessarily affected all the unproved dogmas and illogical hypotheses that had accumulated in his mind. Strauss and his friends were meanwhile promoted to the study of theology. In this study, however, they were not thrown merely upon their personal industry and upon books to the same degree as in philosophy; but the academical instruction afforded them in the one far more advantages than in the other. When Strauss had been a year at the University, his Blaubeuren masters, Kern and Baur, had been also removed there as professors of Theology; and if the merit of the former in this branch of science was limited essentially to clever grouping, to lucid and distinct representation, and to a just estimate of the views of others, though his own lacked exactness and decision, with Baur a new spirit was introduced into the theological faculty, a spirit which was in time to repress the supernaturalism hitherto prevailing in it, and was to place a new 'Tübingen School' in the stead of the old one; namely, the spirit of historical

criticism. Schleiermacher's philosophy of religion and dogmatic theology formed, however, also with Baur the more general scientific substratum of this criticism; and to this, later, after Strauss' university life was over, was added the influence of Hegel's system.[1]

Baur especially, among all Strauss' theological teachers, was the one who exercised a deeper influence upon him. Of the three other members of the faculty, he listened to Kern, indeed, with advantage, but the weakness and uncertainty of his theological views could not long remain concealed from such a pupil as Strauss. From Steudel, the senior of the faculty, an excellent man, and personally most estimable, he could not endure more than four weeks of lectures; and any one who knows from personal experience the wearisome distortions of his supernaturalism, and the torture of his exaggerated style, or had heard them depicted by Strauss,[2] would not blame him for it. Schmidt, lastly, only attracted

[1] Cf. on this point my 'Vorträge und Abhandl.,' p. 381 *et seq.*, 389 *et seq.*

[2] 'Märklin,' p. 38 *et seq.*

him at the end of his academical career by directing his pulpit exercises. It was Schleiermacher, therefore, who exercised the strongest influence upon Strauss also through the medium of his teacher at the commencement of his real theological studies; and it is a fact, not unimportant for the entire further development of Protestant theology, that he as well as Baur, the two founders, therefore, of the new tendency of theological enquiry emanating from Swabia, passed through the school of Schleiermacher before they found their centre of gravity in that of Hegel.

Whilst in North Germany the theological systems of Schleiermacher and of Hegel are wont to adhere to separate channels, strictly severed from each other, here, from the first, they flowed together in one current; they fertilised the soil and supplied mutual deficiencies. From Schleiermacher, men learned to understand religion in its peculiarity, and to comprehend, to analyse, and to examine theological ideas in their historical distinctness: in Hegel they were fascinated by the comprehensiveness of his views, by the strictness

of his dialectic development, and by the alluring prospect of comprehending all things in their innermost principle, and of perceiving in all that is and happens the one revelation of the idea, fulfilling itself with dialectic necessity. Strauss could all the less resist the attractive power of this system, as it was but the logical continuation of that which he had hitherto followed, namely, that of Schelling. There was, indeed, at that time not much to be learned respecting Hegel from the Tübingen lecturers; but just as Strauss and his friends had before sought out their own path in philosophy, so they acted also now. It was not till his last year at college that Strauss read with Märklin and a few others Kant's 'Prolegomena,' which would now be looked upon with other eyes than formerly; and afterwards Hegel's 'Phenomenology,' the very work of this philosopher which was certainly especially fitted to carry the reader from Schelling to Hegel's later independent system, a transition which the author himself passed through. The effect produced on him by this work has been vividly depicted by him in 'Märklin' (p. 54). On the other

hand, the young philosophers would not at that time have relished Marheineke's dogmatics; they were already too far advanced in clearness of thought, and had studied their Schleiermacher too thoroughly, to be able to bear the scholastic formalism of this speculative orthodoxy, much as it is recommended by Hegel himself, and profound as is the wisdom which the North German Hegelians perceive in it. The teaching of Baur, however, concurred with Schleiermacher's writings in disposing the Tübingen Hegelians to assume a more critical demeanour with regard to transmitted theology than had been usual in the school until Strauss made his eventful appearance. For little as this theologian at that time had attained to the just freedom of criticism and the just expansion of historical views which distinguished him later,[1] the lectures which Strauss heard him deliver upon Church history, the history of doctrinal theology, symbolism, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles to the Corinthians, exhibited not merely, as may be supposed, much scholarly learning, but were also

[1] Cf. Strauss' 'Märklin,' p. 39 *et seq.*; p. 51.

replete with exciting ideas calculated to arouse mental freedom;[1] and although the teacher was not at that time perfectly settled in his own views, he was able perhaps all the more to give those apt scholars who were long familiar with him an insight into the mental work of a great and genuinely scientific character.

In the autumn of 1830 Strauss concluded his theological studies with a brilliant examination. At the same time he obtained two academical prizes for preaching and catechising. He was next obliged to exercise himself in the practical service of the Church, and for this purpose, in accordance with the Würtemberg system, he was appointed deputy (*vikar*) to a country clergyman, Pastor Zahn, at Kleiningersheim, a man in feeble health though still young. Owing to the smallness of the parish the business of this office was not so considerable as not to leave him sufficient leisure for the eager continuation of his theological and philosophical

[1] See further remarks on the subject in my 'Vorträge und Abhandl.,' p. 412 *et seq.*

studies. His new abode, picturesquely situated on a height above the Neckar, possessed, in addition to its fresh air, beautiful prospect, and pleasant intercourse with numerous neighbours, the further advantage that it was scarcely more than four miles from Ludwigsburg, and allowed of constant visits to the paternal home. The relation between mother and son, as the latter ripened in years, here became more and more intimate. He was her pride and her consolation, and the confidant of the cares which for many years had burdened her heavily. Moreover, the turn which his theological convictions had recently taken could not possibly be displeasing to the practical and intelligent spirit in which she conceived religion. It was otherwise in this respect with the father; yet this circumstance seems at that time to have caused no disturbance between the two, widely sundered as their opinions must even then have been.

In his village parish Strauss was very popular as a preacher; and subsequently, when under-master (*repetent*) at Tübingen,

he was liked by the lower orders no less than by the more highly cultivated. His discourses, with all the intrinsic value of their contents, were distinguished also by an exemplary popularity. He never introduced speculations and criticism where they were unsuitable. He adhered to the practically religious tenor of the Bible precepts and narratives, and he treated these in the simplest manner, with distinctness and life, while the effect produced on his hearers was assisted by a clear and pleasing voice. The same may be said of his catechising, and in this, besides his dialectic readiness and his logical digestion of the ideas he had acquired, the facility with which he was able to transport himself into the minds of children, and to follow out their answers, was also of service to him. Nevertheless he spent only three quarters of a year in his office of deputy, for in the summer of 1831 he received the order to undertake the duties of a professor who had recently died at the college of Maulbronn. He had here to give instruction in Latin, history, and Hebrew to about thirty youths

on the point of passing to the University; and this task also, unexpectedly as it had devolved upon him, he discharged so well that he gained the most undivided love and esteem of his pupils, among whom was the author of this sketch of his life.

CHAPTER III.

THE LIFE OF JESUS.

In October 1831, Strauss went to Berlin, in order to become personally acquainted with the men to whom he felt he owed the most as regarded his scientific life, and to enjoy their instruction; and in so doing, above all others, not even excepting Schleiermacher, he had Hegel in view. Scarcely, however, had he introduced himself to the great philosopher and attended his first lectures, than, on November 14, Hegel was suddenly carried off by cholera. Strauss heard of this event, which so sadly crossed his plans, from Schleiermacher, when he was paying him his first visit, and startled by it, he exclaimed, to the evident displeasure of his host, 'It was for his sake that I came here!'

For a moment he now thought of leaving Berlin again, but he thought better of it, and

had no occasion to repent of his decision. The capital of the Prussian state and the first of the German universities, which Berlin indisputably was, afforded him such rich material for culture, that we must attach essential value to the winter which he spent there in the maturing of his mind and the enlargement of his knowledge. He found himself in a new world; he made the most eager use of the help which it afforded him, and he formed many valuable personal friendships. He associated with Hegel's widow, with Marheineke, Hitzig, Gans, and other members of the Hegelian school; most closely of all he attached himself to Vatke, with whom for a long time he planned the joint editorship of a periodical. He was moreover a close attendant at Schleiermacher's sermons and lectures; and though in the latter the 'quicksilverlike volubility' of the dialectics was repugnant to him,[1] he owed to them nevertheless many a suggestion; and the work which first made his name famous and feared, received its impetus from Schleiermacher's lecture on the Life of Jesus, which

[1] Cf. the interesting remarks upon Schleiermacher's lecture in the treatise which we shall presently mention: 'Der Christus des Glaubens,' p. 5 *et seq.*

he knew from the transcripts of it made by its hearers, and which at any rate acted as a suggestion from the opposition it aroused in him.

Even at Tübingen, as he himself tells us,[1] it had appeared to him that the point in Hegel's system of most importance to theology was the distinction between active representation (*Vorstellung*) and pure theory (*Begriff*), and soon the main question for him became this, What is the bearing of the above-named distinction on the historical portion of the Bible, especially of the Gospels; are these included in the theoretic content of religion, or do they only form a part of its representative media, with which the fundamental religious conceptions are not indissolubly incorporated? He himself was inclined to decide in favour of the second of these assumptions; and he conceived the idea of a dogmatic theology which, from this point of view, was not merely to trace back the growth of ecclesiastical dogmas to biblical bases, but was also to carry out their solution by deism and rationalism, in order at length to establish them

[1] 'Streitschriften,' part 3, p. 57 *et seq.*

again theoretically in a purified form. He resolved, however, to limit himself first of all to the more special task of completing the 'Life of Jesus,' which, according to his first plan, sketched during his residence in Berlin, was to have been designed in a similar manner to his proposed work on dogmatic theology. It was to present in three parts, first the Life of Christ according to the Gospels, the Life of Christ in believers, and the reconciliation of the two in the second article of the apostolic symbolum. This was to be followed by a critical section analysing the Life of Christ historically. In the third section, however, all that had been annulled was to be dogmatically re-established. For this work Strauss intended to make use of Schleiermacher's before-mentioned lectures; and if he found himself repelled by them, according to his own statement, at almost every point, he nevertheless, he does not neglect to add, ever owed to this repulsion the closer fixing of his attention to many questions. That he could never form any personal intimacy with Schleiermacher was to be anticipated after their first meeting. This was the

case also subsequently with others of his countrymen, who, as Hegelians, met with an extremely cool reception with him, however warm may have been their own feelings of respect for the great theologian, and however sincere their desire to learn from him.[1]

After half a year's residence at Berlin, Strauss returned home, and soon after the beginning of the summer term he was appointed under-master (*repetent*) at Tübingen, where he renewed in the most agreeable and useful manner his former social and scientific intercourse with those of his university friends who were already installed in the same capacity in the Evangelical College, or were installed soon after him. By the students, and especially by his former Maulbronn pupils, his arrival was longingly looked for, as his lectures promised more vigorous and palatable food for the mind than they had been accustomed to meet with from the other teachers of philosophy. Nor were they deceived in their expectations. Strauss began at once a course upon logics and metaphysics, which was followed in the succeeding

[1] Strauss' 'Märklin,' p. 78 *et seq.*

winter by the history of philosophy since Kant, and the explanation of Plato's Feast, and in the summer of 1833 by the history of morals. These lectures had a brilliant success; and still more than the number of hearers they attracted, was the enthusiastic impression they produced. They acted like a beneficent rain upon barren ground; that deeper philosophical interest, which hitherto had been so little cared for at Tübingen, now for the first time met with open acknowledgment and abundant satisfaction in a lecture room; and as Strauss now decidedly took his stand upon Hegel's philosophy, this system became increasingly disseminated by his lectures; and whilst it had hitherto been only the private possession of a few select minds, it now became common property. Hegel could not, indeed, have desired a better interpreter than he here found. The clearness of explanation and the spirited vigour of expression rendered even such a difficult subject as Hegel's Logic intelligible to the understanding; and Strauss, at that stage of his opinions, found no cause for any thorough alterations in it, or for criti-

cising its whole procedure. With greater scientific independence he regarded his material in his lectures on the 'History of Philosophy,' and the excellences of his style of treatment had here an equally rich opportunity of rendering themselves apparent. His discourse adhered for the most part to the carefully prepared written form. Strauss himself subsequently expresses his opinion in his 'Memoir of Spittler'[1] that this scholar could have been no Swabian if free delivery had presented no difficulty to him. But at the same time he was so animated and interesting, that his listeners were constantly struck by the externals of his style, and their attention to the subject was kept up; and among the many who at that time listened to Strauss, so far as they are yet among the living, there is not one who does not remember with thankfulness and pleasure the hours in which he followed his words.

Nevertheless Strauss' academical labours were only of short duration. Throughout them he had never lost sight of his plan of writing a Life of Jesus, and in order to find the

[1] 'Kl. Schr.,' i. 77.

necessary time for this, he relinquished his lectures in the autumn of 1833, after three terms. The longer the task which he now undertook had occupied him previous to its execution, the more rapid was its present progress. A rare power of work was combined in him with an equally great delight in work; to brilliant talent was added thorough scientific culture; and acute and well-disciplined thought was united with a perfect command of language and expression, so completely inherent in him by nature, that he himself remarks in his note-book, that he was never in the least conscious of wrestling with language, or, indeed, of any special effort; that in everything which he wished to express, the right word always occurred of itself, and that unsought for; the suitable form and appropriate tone presented itself for every kind of subject. The impulse with which the work originated was so strong in the author's mind, that a year after the beginning of its first preparatory arrangement, the whole, with the exception of the concluding dissertation, in all more than fourteen hundred printed pages, was ready in manuscript. The first volume ap-

peared in the summer, the second in the autumn of 1835, under the title, 'The Life of Jesus Critically Considered.' Thus the die was cast, the step was ventured, which was to decide Strauss' scientific importance, his position in his age, and the future course of his life.

The 'Life of Jesus,' as he had formerly designed it, had now become a criticism of the evangelical accounts of the Life of Christ; and although this criticism was followed by a concluding dissertation, which promised to exhibit the dogmatic value as unimpaired, still this did not merely amount to only a few pages in extent, but it led, as we shall see, to no result which could change the critical character of the work. The criticism moreover, and this has been urged against it, and also really denotes the point at which it required completion, was not a criticism of the *Gospels*, but of the *Gospel story*; in other words, it was limited in its essential purpose to the question whether, and how far, all that is told us by our four Gospels really happened. The preliminary question on the other hand, how it stood with these writings themselves

as such—where, when, and by whom, under what circumstances and with what intention, they were composed,—was not taken further into consideration than in the brief authentication[1] that none of our Gospels can be proved as the work of a man, the period and circumstances of whose life would render impossible the assumption of incorrectness of statement; that consequently criticism was perfectly free to expunge from their narratives everything which carried with it the appearance of being untrue to history. These appearances were to be found in various statements, in their contradiction with the facts of the case as attested by other accounts, and more frequently and in more important instances in the contradiction existing between the different Gospel statements themselves. The most decided indications of non-historical truth were, however, in Strauss' eyes the miracles, which are scattered so freely throughout the Gospel narratives, that scarcely any incident is recorded in them which is not intermixed more or less superficially with miracles. On this point he had, however,

[1] I., 62 *et seq.* 1st edition.

to deal with two classes of interpreters into which, at the time he wrote his book, theologians were almost without exception divided, namely, the supernaturalists, who adhered to the actual occurrence of the miracles, and the rationalists, who acknowledged the miracles, it is true, as such, but endeavoured all the more to rescue the truth of the Biblical narratives by a natural explanation of the miraculous incidents which they recorded. Strauss, for his part, was satisfied with neither of these. If the exegesis of the ancient Church emanated from the double hypothesis that the Gospels contained in the first place history, and in the second place a record of the supernatural, and if rationalism rejected the second of these hypotheses, in order to cling only all the more firmly to the first, it is impossible, as he says (I. v.), for science to halt in this manner midway; all other considerations must be set aside, and it must first be proved whether, and how far, we stand at all on an historical basis in the Gospels. This principle he followed out with the utmost severity and exactness through the whole of our Gospels, from beginning to end. He analysed their narra-

tives, he studied their different views and explanations, he examined how they agreed, on the one side, with the demonstrable opinion of the narrator, and on the other with the general laws of the event; and in this way he arrived at length at the result, that a great part, indeed, as regards its extent, the greater part of the Gospel records contained either no historical matter at all, or historical matter so disfigured that it was scarcely recognisable as such. And in this he did not limit himself to those points which in themselves have no longer any deeper significance to the Christianity of our own day, and which are adhered to by most persons more for the sake of the principle of derogating in nothing from Scriptural authority, such as the visible ascent into heaven, the history of the birth and childhood, and various miracles; but also the words of the Christ of St. John almost entirely, and even a narrative as deeply affecting dogmatic theology as that of the resurrection. In short, everything that would oblige us to see more than a man in the founder of Christianity, or to raise him above the conditions of his age and his surroundings, was set aside by him as

non-historical. If, however, these narratives, and these distinct parts of the narratives, are not historical, what are they then, and how are we to explain their origin? Certainly not, answers the critic, by historical recollection; equally little by free, conscious invention; but by an unconscious, unintentional fiction, which, as such, cannot be the work of one man, but only of a body of men, of the community in whose bosom these narratives have been formed. Those non-historical narratives are, therefore, in a word, legends which our Evangelists found existing in the Christian community of their age, and which they received from oral tradition, fully believing in their truth. The formation of these legends was not, however, on the whole, left to chance; little as they proceeded from conscious calculation, their authors were unconsciously guided by certain ideas and interests disseminated in the earliest Christian communities; they are not simple legends, but legends originating from a dogmatic tendency —they are *myths*.

To the former interpretations of the Gospel history, Strauss opposed a mythical inter-

pretation. There was, he thinks, a double interest at work in the formation of the legends respecting Christ; the founder of Christianity was on the one side to be glorified as much as possible, and on the other side the fulfilment of the Messianic prophecy was to be proved in Him; He was to be represented as the one in whose person, acts, and fate all those characteristics were combined which, proceeding partly from Old Testament prophecy, and partly from later interpretations and amplifications, belonged to the idea of the Jewish Messiah of that period. In accordance with these views, he estimated the substance of the Gospel tradition, and so far as the critic could not regard it as historical, he endeavoured to explain it as mythical. This non-historical portion is, indeed, as we have already remarked, very great; and nothing is left as the historical balance of criticism—and this Strauss did not attempt to gather together expressly, and to digest historically, in the work under consideration—but the general outline of the Life of Jesus, from his public appearance to his death on the cross.

Nevertheless, not merely in the preface to

his first volume, but also in the concluding dissertation of his second volume, Strauss adhered to the statement that the critic of the 19th century, differing from the free-thinker and the naturalist, is conscious of the substance of the Christian religion as identical with the highest philosophical truth; and after having in the course of his criticism only exhibited the distinction of his conviction from belief in Christian history, he promises to establish it also on the ground of identity. If, however, we indeed look more closely into the matter, we perceive that dogmatic criticism had already carried him much further than was consistent with Hegel's propositions with regard to the relation between pure theory (*Begriff*) and active representation (*Vorstellung*), however evidently these pervade the above remarks. Pursuing the history of doctrinal theology, he follows the formation of ecclesiastical Christology and the attacks to which it has been subjected, and thoroughly accepts the results of the criticism which Schleiermacher and rationalism had suffered patiently; on the other side he blames rationalism for having stinted the belief of the

Church in order to maintain itself in unison with it; he points out, however, also to Schleiermacher, that the ideal and the historical in his Christ in nowise actually coincide, as he desired they should; that knowledge as well as belief falls short with him; and he can just as little convince himself of the defensibility of attempts to deduce from Hegel's propositions of the unity of the divine and human nature a God-man as an historical personality. The idea, he declares, is not wont to disburden all its fulness in one person and to be parsimonious with all others, but it loves to diffuse its riches in a variety of individuals who mutually supply what is lacking in the other. This is the key, he states, of all Christology, that an idea, instead of an individual, is placed as the subject of the predicates which the Church attributes to Christ. Conceived in an individual, a God-man, these predicates are contradictory; in the idea of the race they harmonize. Humanity alone is the Incarnate God; of it alone can all that be stated (as he carries out in detail), which we can attribute to no single

man without falling from one contradiction into another.

That serious difficulties may, indeed, arise to the practical theologian in his relation to his congregation in this transition from active representation to pure theory, even though he may be able to set his own mind at rest on the point, Strauss does not attempt to dispute. But this collision, he remarks, is not caused by the inconsiderate curiosity of a single individual, but is necessarily brought about by the course of time and the advance of Christian theology; and while many guard against it by abstaining from study and thought, or even from freedom of speech and writing, there are others who, in spite of all opposition, freely confess what can no longer remain concealed. 'And time will show,' he adds, in conclusion, 'which of the two is of greater service to the Church, to humanity, and to truth.'

CHAPTER IV.

THE DIE CAST.

THE 'Life of Jesus,' immediately on its appearance, produced a sensation rarely made by a theological or philosophical work. If it was not for the first time that mythical elements in the Bible had been spoken of, this assumption had been hitherto far more timidly advanced, and in the New Testament especially it had been limited to a few narratives, and those of less importance in a dogmatic respect. Now, on the contrary, it was applied to the whole of the Gospel tradition to such an extent, and with such regardless logical consistency, that it threatened utterly to explain away the historical substance, or to shrivel it to the smallest compass. And this result was not an assertion lightly thrown out, but it was obtained by an investigation entering with scholarly profoundness into every

detail, and by a comprehensive examination of different opinions, discussing every probability, and closing every way of escape to its adversaries. Men had not to deal with the *coup de main* of a bold partisan, but with a well considered stroke, aimed with masterly dialectic power, with the force of an attack directed against the central point of their own position and carried out with profound scientific conviction. And this attack appeared all the more dangerous as the work in which it was made was also distinguished by a beauty of language and a readiness and clearness of expression, such as had been hitherto almost unprecedented in scientific works in Germany. Can we wonder if, immediately after the appearance of the work, the most violent storm burst forth against the presumptuous critic; if those called upon, and those not called upon, hastened to extinguish the dangerous firebrand; if he was attacked by a general levy of the people in addition to well-disciplined troops and was fought with unpermitted and worn-out weapons, in addition to those more pertinent in character and more in harmony with scientific customs? For several years

not merely in Germany almost all theological literature hinged upon Strauss's 'Life of Jesus,' but other lands also took a lively interest in it, as its English and French translations testify. Hundreds of refutations, of every tone and size, appeared; as early as 1838 the third edition of the work had become necessary, and this was soon after followed by a fourth; and those who can speak of the period from personal remembrance, and who have had opportunity of perceiving the tone of feeling in various parts of Germany, must confess that no scientific or literary production has ever since occasioned such general and lively excitement in the minds of men.

What sort of a man, however, was it against whom all these attacks were directed, and who had thrown down this apple of discord to the age? The question suggested itself all the more readily as the author of the 'Life of Jesus' had hitherto only introduced himself to the notice of the scientific world by a few reviews, in which, it is true, unusual critical and literary ability was already to be perceived. But, as is often the

case, those who judged of him only by his writings and their immediate effects conceived almost infallibly an erroneous idea of him; and this even when they did not belong to the great number of those who did not and would not understand that others besides immoral and reprobate men may oppose the religious notions to which they themselves cling, and that a man may be compelled by his conscience and his love of truth to doubt and dispute that which is most sacred and unapproachable

Even in his outward appearance Strauss but little corresponded with the idea which probably most people formed of him from his works; and few would have divined the bold writer pitilessly analysing his subject with scientific coldness in the delicate lines of the youthful countenance, the slight bend of the head, and the contemplative down-cast eye, which with its peculiar action, indicating weakness of the organ, gave an impression of almost girlish shyness.

To those who knew him personally he appeared an intelligent, highly cultivated man, and in more intimate circles he was a

lively, cheerful, and agreeable companion and an excellent narrator, possessing the keenest appreciation of all that was naïve and humorous, both in a kindly and comic point of view; at the same time, however, he had a tender, fine-feeling, and artistic nature, which in its purity and inward reserve shunned all disturbance, to which any personal pre-eminence cost a certain self-command, and which in any rude collision was easily wounded and drew back shyly within itself. With all this there were sharply stamped those traits of a manly character which struck the eye at once on the author's public appearance: quickly and powerfully excited anger, a decided and energetic will, and a scientific courage, which, if necessary, would defy the opinion of the whole world. It was not, however, very easy to find the inner point of unity in qualities apparently so widely differing: to perceive in depth of feeling the birthplace of the energetic will, in delicacy of æsthetic taste one of the roots of that critical sagacity, in the natural delight in whatever was genuine and naïve that feature of his mind which made Strauss in science also a

foe to all misty ideas and all abstract formulas, to all that was artificial and inwardly untrue; to trace back to the same source the sensitiveness to disturbance, of whatever kind it might be, and that scientific courage connected with it: namely, to that idealism which in the first place desired to mould into harmony his own inner life and to bring it to a satisfactory conclusion, but which for that very reason turned vigorously and regardlessly against aught that demanded an acknowledgment from him which he felt compelled to refuse.

How much Strauss had ventured with his work he was soon to prove. Even before the appearance of his second volume he was removed from his post at Tübingen, and in its place he was assigned a position as teacher in the lyceum of his native town. It would indeed have been best to have declined this office from the first, and to have come forward as teacher of philosophy at Tübingen, where his admission into the philosophical faculty would scarcely have been opposed, and perhaps even his appointment would not at that time have met with that opposi-

tion which subsequently certainly excluded all who shared Strauss's views from obtaining even a philosophical professorship. But whether it was that his old bourgeois respectability shrunk from such an uncertain career, or that he was unwilling to fetter himself to a philosophical course of instruction whilst he felt himself a master in theological criticism, and that he here saw so much work still before him, Strauss consented to the unwelcome office, and after remaining a few months at Tübingen outside the college, he entered upon his duties in the autumn of 1835.

Residence, however, in a town which afforded him neither scientific resources nor scientific intercourse, could scarcely permanently suit him, and the instruction of immature boys, which he had to impart for seventeen hours weekly, could not possibly be pleasing to him. To this other things were moreover added. He resided at Ludwigsburg, and, as was natural and under existing circumstances totally unavoidable, in his parents' house; but by this means he came into constant dispute with his father, who had from the beginning disapproved of

his opinions and their bold expression in the 'Life of Jesus,' and was all the more angry with his degenerated son the more violent grew the storm which the latter had called forth against himself. There were painful scenes: Strauss's mother had much to suffer under the incongruity existing between husband and son, and it was full time for the latter to withdraw from a position that had become intolerable, when in the autumn of 1836 he resigned the post which he had occupied for a year, and proceeded to Stuttgart, in order to devote his time uninterruptedly to his literary pursuits.[1]

The inducement to take this step was not wanting. Even in the first year after the completion of the 'Life of Jesus' a second edition became necessary, and this speedily, as we have already said, was followed by a third and fourth. Strauss used this opportunity for renewed examination, correction, and completion of his work in the most conscientious manner, nor did he exclude himself from the objections of his adversaries; but

[1] Strauss alludes to the state of things referred to in his 'Kl. Schr.,' *N. F.*, p. 264 et seq.

after having made considerable concessions to them in the third edition, especially as regards the Gospel of St. John, he became finally convinced that he had ceded to them more than was necessary and than was consistent with the logical carrying out of his views, and in the fourth edition he drew back again most of these concessions. In addition to the revision he was, however, also occupied in the defence of his work. After all the attacks and reproaches, the objections, misunderstandings, and misconstructions, to which his work and himself had been exposed since the first appearance of the 'Life of Jesus,' it seemed to him the fitting time to come to a thorough explanation and to settle matters distinctly with the most distinguished of his adversaries, as he could do this by adding occasional notes to the second edition; and in so doing he in no wise thought alone of warding off attacks, but he acted also on his side on the offensive: he desired not merely to examine the defensibility of the arguments which had been raised against him, but also to delineate the views and procedure of his adversaries, to bring

their weakness to light, and by a comprehensive analysis of his scientific and literary character to decide the question as to his right to come forward.

In this spirit he discussed in the first of the three parts of his 'Polemical Papers'[1] 'Dr. Steudel on the Self-delusions of the Wise Supernaturalism of the present Day;' in the second, he considered the attacks of two laymen, Eschenmayer and Menzel, one of whom had taken part in the theological dispute in as fanatical a spirit, and the other in as overbearing a manner, as they were both ignorant and uncalled for; the third was devoted to Hengstenberg and the Evangelical Church Journal, to the Hegelian school and the journals for scientific criticism, and to the medium theology and its main organ, 'Studies and Critics.' In these discussions also the same masterly power was displayed as in the 'Life of Jesus.' Strauss's 'Polemical Papers' are a controversial work, and no more brilliant production of the kind has ever appeared

[1] 'Streitschriften zur Vertheidigung meiner Schrift über das Leben Jesu und zur Characteristik der gegenwärtigen Theologie,' part 3, 1837.

in German literature since the time of Lessing. Whether he was demonstrating to Steudel the self-delusions of a supernaturalism which was infected with rationalism far more deeply than he was aware of, or pointing out the mistakes of his apology, and the distortion of his interpretation, or proving to Eschenmayer, the spiritualist philosopher, the dim unreasonableness of his fanaticism; whether he was bringing forward Menzel as a literary historian and critic, or Hengstenberg as an inquisitor; whether he was discussing with the Hegelian school the theological consequences of its system, or with Ullmann the extent of the concessions which this theologian had made to criticism; everywhere we find the accurate and thorough work, the certain knowledge, and the victorious dialectic power which had already distinguished the earlier production; and at the same time a readiness of expression, a profusion of startling allusions, of distinct and striking points, a keenly appropriate characterisation of persons and views, and a well-considered and not unfrequently annihilating humour, which could here be brought to bear far more strongly than before.

As regards subject, the explanations with the, Hegelians and with Wolfgang Menzel possess the greatest interest; the former, because not only did the scholastic divinity of the old Hegelian orthodoxy, the championship of which had been assumed in this instance by Bruno Bauer, receive its due rebuff, but Hegel's own position with regard to the questions of Gospel criticism and Christology was thoroughly investigated; the latter because it combined with the chastisement of an assuming and superficial writer, who for ten years had taken the lead in criticism and in literary and political history, and had maintained a perfect terrorism with his moral political inquisition, an abundance of sound opinions and acute observations, some with respect to different men, such as Goethe and Johannes Müller, and some upon more general questions, such as the applicability of the moral standard to art. Strauss's intended continuation of the 'Polemical Papers' was not arrived at, as he was interrupted in their preparation by the necessity of a third edition of the 'Life of Jesus,' and that which was to have occupied his attention in the former was

in all essential points introduced into the main work itself.

In December 1837 Strauss wrote to me just as the third edition of the 'Life of Jesus' was passing through the press, and declared that when once he had finished his task he would not very soon again use his theological pen. And it is true that during this and the two following years we have several works by him which stand in no connection with his theological critical investigations, such as the notices of Hoffmeister's and Hinrich's works on Schiller, of Auerbach's Spinoza, of some writings on magnetism and spiritual possession, two papers on which (by Kerner) he had reviewed in 1836, and other things; also the before-mentioned account of Kerner; and lastly the valuable treatise upon Schleiermacher and Daub, entering fully into the characters, writings, and opinions of the two men. If the latter belongs, in its main purport at any rate, to the history of theology, another production of the same period, the 'Discourses upon the Transitory and the Permanent in Christianity,' affords a still more direct proof of the fact

that at that time Strauss was on the fair way to lay aside his theological pen. These discourses are nothing else than an answer to the question as to what was still lacking to views of religion and Christianity such as his; and this answer is given in such a conciliatory spirit that its author was justified when he published them in 1839 with the article upon Kerner, under the title of 'Zwei friedliche Blätter' ('Two Peaceful Papers'), whilst in the same year he joined his treatise upon Schleiermacher and Daub with his other smaller works, in the 'Characteristics and Critics.' Here, it is true, the main results of his critical work were partly repeated and partly expanded in their dogmatic aspect. He explains shortly and concisely how the prospect of future recompense cannot, and ought not, to have the significance of a moral incitement; how equally little the resurrection of Christ could affect the ground of our belief in Him, even if its actual occurrence and its wonderful character were more surely established than is in truth the case; how the redemption by his vicarious sufferings and death is no longer consistent with our moral

notions, and therefore his death as an external fact is of value not so much as regards religion itself, but rather as regards the history of religion and metaphorical expression; how only those of the miracles of the Gospel story are to be accepted as probable which may be considered, it is true, as somewhat unusual, but not as somewhat supernatural, and which therefore possess no demonstrative power of a religiously dogmatic nature; how neither the supernatural origin nor the theandric nature of Christ finds a place in our conception, and the worship of genius is the only thing which is left to the cultivated minds of the present time. But this very thought, following out still further the suggestions which he had already thrown out on the subject in the third part of the 'Polemical Papers,' serves him now as a bridge for obtaining for the founder of Christianity the prerogative of being the highest of his kind. This prerogative is more accurately established by the fact that the religious genius is, as such, distinguished from all others, and is exalted above them by the harmonious perfection of the inner life; in the sphere of

religion itself, however, the highest, the perfect unity of human self-consciousness with divine consciousness, is only attained when, as in Jesus, the man is decided in every action entirely by this alone, and at the same time knows and feels this decision as his own self-determination.

Strauss here, therefore, so far approximates to Schleiermacher's Christology that he declares that just as little as mankind will ever be without religion, so little will they ever be without Christ, and the less we scrupulously adhere to dogmas and opinions which must tend to impede thought, the more surely does Christ remain to us as the highest whom we know in a religious respect, and as that one without whose presence in the heart no perfect piety is possible. As his last work marks the point of his furthest removal from positive Christianity, so the 'Discourses on the Transitory and Permanent' mark that of his greatest approximation to it; and this is manifested at the same time in the third edition of the 'Life of Jesus,' with regard to historically critical questions, by his readiness to come to an understanding with the more free-thinking

of his adversaries. Subsequently he perceived, it is true, something unsound in the frame of mind which produced this work; he remarked that the fear of seeing himself standing so alone had thrilled through him, and had induced him to make the mistaken attempt to effect a connection between himself and those more or less believing, by means of a pathway however narrow and tottering. Still he would not contradict the friend who touchingly remarked that in his monologues he was so full of good will, and that nevertheless his convictions broke forth with inconsiderate violence.

It was a strange coincidence that about the same time in which this turn occurred in Strauss's own feelings the prospect was opened to him of using his influence as theological teacher at a university, as about the beginning of the year 1839 a professorship of theology at the Zürich University was offered him by the free-thinking Zürich government. As far as he was concerned, he found no reason in his scientific convictions for refusing an office which afforded him opportunity of indulging those convictions in

perfect freedom. But before he had had time to enter upon his new office the government who had nominated him found itself obliged, by the eagerly fostered and skilfully directed excitement of the people, to cancel its appointment, though even by this pliability it could not allay the storm, which burst forth in the well-known insurrection of September 1839.

All hope was thus cut off from Strauss of ever obtaining that position and work which were more in harmony with his nature and his wishes than any other, and for which he had long shown such distinguished capability. He made up his mind that throughout his life he was to dispense with a thing, the privation of which must have been an especially sore burden to him, namely, regular professional labour, and all the excitement, refreshment, and satisfaction which it brings with it; that like an outlaw he was to find no admission among the publicly acknowledged representatives of science, superior as he might be to most of them; and that with all his talent as a teacher he could not act as such on account of 'moral unsuitability,' for he was

never proposed or nominated even in a philosophical faculty, in more than one branch of which he could have rendered the most important services. He had succeeded indeed in securing to his name a lasting importance in the history of science, and in his youthful years in making himself the central point of an intellectual movement of incalculable extent; but for this he had heavily to atone, inasmuch as his convictions rendered it a duty to subject those of others to so unsparing and irrefutable a criticism.

CHAPTER V.

THE SOLACE OF WORK.

In the same year in which the Zürich appointment took place, with all its excitement, its vexation, and its unfavourable issue, a second heavy blow befell our friend, namely, his mother's death. In her earlier years she had long been ill, but at the time that Strauss had first quitted his paternal home she had greatly recovered, and for ten years, though weak and delicate, she had enjoyed very tolerable health. During the last few years, however, a change had taken place, combined with a return of her former suffering condition. Repeated visits to the adjacent baths, which had before proved efficacious, were now resultless, and in March 1839 she sunk under a rapid acceleration of her malady. The paternal home therefore lost all its attraction and value for Strauss. Two years

afterwards; in April 1841, his father died also.

All the more energetically, therefore; did Strauss throw himself upon the only thing that could divert him from these sad and adverse occurrences, namely, his scientific work. His life at Stuttgart was extremely retired and simple. For several years he lived alone in a small garden-house at the back of the Charlotten-Strasse, which he had furnished, according to his taste, in the most unassuming manner. Besides his regular intercourse with a few intimate friends, his only recreation was a short walk, an occasional visit to a theatre or concert, and a short journey in summer. On the contrary, he avoided almost timidly all larger and noisier society, and if he did not withdraw from the visitors whom curiosity or admiration led to him, he nevertheless did nothing to enliven them unless he perceived a more serious interest in his scientific investigations. He desired to keep himself aloof from every disturbance, in order to devote himself to work with all his powers; and he now turned his attention to a task which he had already had for years

before him. We have before mentioned that even previous to his design of the 'Life of Jesus' he had sketched the plan of a work on doctrinal theology; it had, however, given place to the 'Life of Jesus,' and for some time the idea had fallen into the background.[1] He now returned to it. He resolved to place by the side of his work on the Gospel story a similar work on the Christian system of religion, preparatory studies for which he had already partly made, originally in preparation for a lecture which was to be delivered at Zürich. Of the two volumes that formed this work the first was completed in the winter of 1839–40, and the second in the winter of 1840–41; the former appeared in 1840, the latter in 1841. But as Strauss's 'Life of Jesus' had become a criticism of the narratives of the life of Jesus, so his 'Doctrinal Theology' became a criticism of the Christian system of religion. The general rule of this criticism, the standard which was applied to the transmitted dogmas, was the view of modern science, and especially that of Hegel's 'Philosophy of Religion,' with

[1] Cf. page 27 and Strauss's 'Glaubensl.,' Preface.

which Strauss, at any rate at that time, agreed both as regards the speculative theology that formed its basis and also the hypothesis that in dogmas is essentially involved the scientific correctness of *representative* belief; that hence their authority and importance are determined in proportion to the harmony or contradiction in which they stand to the results of modern science, and especially to those of the Hegelian system. As, however, the critic is convinced that this proportion is not casual, but obeys an inner necessity and accords with general historical laws, the criticism of the dogma coincides in his opinion with the explanation of its historical formation and analysis, and with the history of doctrinal theology correctly understood and applied; and only by this means, so far as it is supported by the latter, can its right be indisputably proved.

'The subjective criticism of the individual,' he says, 'is a water-pipe which any boy can close for a time: criticism, objectively carried out, as it is in the course of centuries, rushes along like a roaring stream, against which all dams and sluices can effect

nothing.' 'The true criticism of dogma is its history.'[1] Strauss's mode of procedure is in accordance with this. In systematic succession he examines all the principal articles of apology and dogma; at each he gives a statement of the Biblical doctrine; he shows how from this, in most cases after long wavering and with increasing expunging of anomalous opinions, rejected as heretical, the dogmas of the old, mediæval, and Protestant Church have been formed; how, however, at once in the questions which they leave unanswered, in the contrasts which they leave unreconciled, and in the contradictions which they leave unsolved, have originated the criticism of the Socinians, Arminians, Deists, Rationalists, and others, down to Schleiermacher and Hegel; he examines the various attempts that have been made to refute this criticism or to restrict it to less essential points; and in conclusion he draws from all these considerations and reflections this result, in order to establish how much of each article of faith is to be maintained when tested by the science of the present day.

[1] 'Glaubensl.,' i. x. 71.

His work, as its title expressly intimates, is to exhibit 'the Christian system of religion in its historical development and in contest with modern science;' 'it is,' as he says in the Preface, 'to render that service to dogmatic science which a balance renders to a house of business;' it is 'to afford a survey of the state of dogmatic property,' and this is, in Strauss's opinion, 'all the more an urgent necessity at the present day, as the greater number of theologians indulge in the utmost illusions on the matter.' 'We estimate too lightly,' he says, 'the deduction which the criticism and polemics of the last two centuries have made from the old theological stock, and on the other hand far too highly the equivocal resources which we imagine we have found in the sentimental theology and mystical philosophy of the present day. We think we have in a great measure already gained in the enquiries still pending upon those deductions, and that we are sure of the richest gain from the newly opened shafts. It might, however, be the case that these actions might all be lost at once: and if, in addition to this, these new mines deluded

our expectations, bankruptcy would be unavoidable.'

What he here in the Preface holds out as a possible case, we perceive in the work itself to be his full opinion. Not merely are the 'positive doctrines' to which Rationalism had long laid claim attacked by Strauss with the double weapons of philosophical and historical criticism in a decided and severe manner, comprising all former objections; but Strauss also turns so forcibly and plainly against those hypotheses which the adversaries of doctrinal theology had hitherto as a rule shared with its advocates, namely, the personality of God, the idea of the creation, the personal government of the world affecting each individually, and the personal existence after death, that the most general and violent opposition could not fail to be aroused. If in his attacks upon those positive articles of faith he could point to a mode of thought already widely disseminated, he had here but few predecessors on whom he could rest; and among these a Spinoza and a Fichte were held in such evil repute by most persons in a theological respect, and a Schleiermacher had

on the other hand contrived so adroitly to conceal the deductions of his Pantheism, and to blend them with the evidences of his Christian consciousness, that the greater number of his admirers scarcely perceived them, or if they did, they readily excused them as slight though always lamentable blemishes on the picture of the great man.

Strauss, on the contrary, had no such plea to screen him: he could neither plead other services rendered by him to the Church, nor had he observed any forbearance in expressing his conviction; he had rather expressly aimed at making perfectly clear the relation in which the Christian faith stood to the science of the present day; he was convinced, he said (i. 356), that there had been false attempts enough at reconciliation, that nothing but a separation of the opposing parties could avail, and he demanded that the man of belief should allow the man of science, and that the latter should allow the former, to pursue his own way quietly: 'if, however,' he adds, 'the over-pious should succeed in excluding us from their church, we shall regard this as an advantage.' But, in spite of this, it

was not his intention, as far as he was concerned, to sever the threads which even in his opinion still linked them with the Church. He disputes indeed Hegel's assertion that religion and philosophy are identical in their substance and only different in form, but he acknowledges that it is one and the same reason which finds its purest expression in philosophy, but which also governs the activity of the imagination and through the successive series of religions leads to ever greater approximation to the truth (i. 22); and with regard to the Christian religion especially he says (i. 30) that it is equally onesided to desire to see in it only the unity of the Divine and the human or only their separation. For far as it is removed from the monism of modern speculation, and easily as the point of union between the two sides can vanish imperceptibly, it is just this same vanishing-point to which Christianity owes its universal historical power. The dualism of the Divine and the human had been long before it accurately developed; the union of the two accomplished in the person of Christ had first created new spiritual life. As the introduc-

tion to such a vast attack upon the whole structure of the Christian system of religion, this sounds placable enough: the question which Strauss thirty years afterwards could no longer answer in the affirmative: 'Are we still Christians?' he would at that time have scarcely replied to in the negative.

As a scientific and literary production the 'Doctrine of Faith' is but little inferior to the 'Life of Jesus;' on the contrary, it exhibits a still greater maturity of art. The thorough and vast knowledge of dogmatic history which in all points of any consideration is drawn direct from the primary sources, the perfect mastery of the immense material, the art with which the most important matter is sketched and the most insignificant is inserted at the right place, the steady tone of the delineation, the successful distribution of light and shade, the appropriate characterisation of every opinion and point of view, the keen perception, the able demonstration of the weak points, the defects and contradictions in dogmatic tenets and systems, the skilful use of all the available matters afforded by his predecessors, the plastic perspicuity

of expression, the distinctness of arrangement and construction, the spirited vigour of the language—all these excellences are as strongly or still more strongly apparent in the 'Doctrine of Faith' as in the earlier work; and while the latter, especially in the monotonous repetition of the accounts of the miracles, could not avoid occasionally entering into wearisome details, the former, from the greater variety of the subject, is qualified to fascinate the reader's attention to every point from the beginning to the end. That it would, however, produce a commotion as great as that excited by the 'Life of Jesus' was not to be expected, because the latter had robbed it beforehand of a considerable part of its effect; and, moreover, simultaneously with the second volume of the 'Doctrine of Faith' a work appeared in Feuerbach's 'Wesen des Christenthums' ('Nature of Christianity') which was similar to Strauss's in substance and tendency, which was written with intelligence and spirit, and by its more popular and at the same time more radical character was still better suited to a part of the public. Nevertheless this second great work

of the famous critic, as might be seen from the number and irritated tone of the replies to it, produced such an effect, and it was in itself so important, that in this respect nothing of the kind that has appeared since Schleiermacher's 'Doctrinal Theology' can be compared with it.

After the completion of the 'Doctrine of Faith' a pause occurred in the theological labours of its author, lasting for more than twenty years, and only broken in the year 1864 by the 'Life of Christ for the German People.' Astonishing as this may appear in a man endowed with such deep theological culture and learning, and who on his first appearance in this branch of study had won for himself a European name, it is yet conceivable from Strauss's personal character, and from the turn which his outward life as well as his theological views had taken. As Goethe composed his poems in the first place for himself, so was it also in a certain sense with Strauss, who in his sensibility and in his need of undisturbed individual development resembled the poet, whom he admired with all the warmth of a congenial nature.

He took up his pen in order to appropriate by scientific labour and artistic form aught that excited his interest, or in order to free himself by an exhaustive explanation of that which intruded itself disturbingly upon his thoughts and feelings. "He required to be angry in order to write," he once said to a friend in the latter respect. The effect of his writings upon others was a secondary consideration with him, little as he was indifferent to it. His theological works had now afforded him this service as regards himself; he was settled as to his position with respect to theology; and in this settlement the positive interest which he had formerly taken in it had become so weakened that for some time it no longer acted as a stimulant. As, moreover, no professorship necessitated his continued occupation with theological questions, he had also outwardly no powerful inducement to literary work on this subject; he withdrew from personal participation in it, and followed the works of his friends as an interested spectator; but he was not to be induced to take part in them, however desired this may have

been both for the sake of the matter and the periodicals they supplied.

Whilst he thus shrunk from publicity as an author, he began seriously to think of procuring for himself the basis of a satisfying human existence by a suitable domestic life. It was not unknown to his friends that some years before Agnese Schebest, a highly gifted actress who had appeared at Stuttgart as a guest, had made a deep impression upon him not merely by the beauty of her singing and the classical perfection of her acting, but also by the sweetness of her nature and the charm of her personal appearance. A second visit afforded him opportunity of obtaining the aim of his wishes, and in August 1842 the betrothal took place at Hochheim, near Heilbronn, in the presence of a few friends. The newly-married pair resided at first in the neighbourhood of Heilbronn, in the beautifully-situated little castle at the entrance to the village of Sontheim, and afterwards at Heilbronn itself, where full opportunity was afforded for intercourse with friends. Strauss here enjoyed the intimacy of the two friends of his youth, Märklin and Kaufmann, and

their wives, the one professor at the Gymnasium, closely connected with him by similarity of studies and opinions ever since their university life, a man whose sound and amiable character has been delineated with warmth and spirit by Strauss in his well-known biography; the other by vocation a teacher of mathematics, but at the same time a distinguished musician, whose natural and kindly nature expressed itself in charming vocal compositions. In addition to these, Kerner and his family resided at the adjacent Weinsberg; the eldest daughter was married at Heilbronn to Strauss's friend and physician Dr. Niethhammer; and besides these there was a circle, by no means small, in which Strauss found stimulant and recreation, especially in the regular evening meetings of the men; college tutors, such as Finckh and Schnitzer, both of whom have gained reputation by philosophical works, and the latter also by theological ones, and, on the removal of the latter, Rümelin, now Chancellor of the University of Tübingen; civil functionaries, and physicians, such as the original Dr. Sicherer, well known to the readers of Strauss's

'Kleine Schriften'[1] by Strauss's oration to his memory; merchants, such as the universally respected Goppelt and Künzel, immortalised jestingly by Strauss also in the 'Kleine Schriften,'[2] whose constant and ready obligingness in matters of daily life he requited on his part by an act of literary friendship, assisting him in the publication of an unprinted comedy by Schiller.

But agreeable as Strauss found much in the circumstances of his present life, he lacked unfortunately just the two conditions of permanent happiness which were most indispensable to him; outside his home he lacked regular professional work, and within his home that harmony of mind for which nothing can compensate, however valuable in itself. The characters, the mode of education, and the past life of Strauss and his wife, were too dissimilar, their demands upon each other and upon life were too different, and both were too firmly rooted in their peculiarities. Their marriage was not happy, and after five years they separated by mutual agreement, though without legal divorce. The wife repaired to

[1] 'N.F' 333 et seq. [2] 'N.F.,' 476 et seq.

Stuttgart, where she had many friends, and she resided there until her death, which took place on December 22, 1870, three years previous to that of her husband. Strauss began a wandering life, from the discomfort of which he suffered not a little, without being able, however, to settle himself anywhere for more than a few years. One thing, however, he had saved from the shipwreck of his domestic life—namely, two children, whose love and whose mental development became a source of joy to him, and whose future career likewise proved in accordance with his wishes. The elder was a daughter, the younger a boy. At first, indeed, they both remained with their mother; after some years, however, Strauss took possession of them, and thus regained a considerable portion of that blessing, the full and untroubled possession of which had been denied him by fate.

It was in consequence of the circumstances just mentioned that Strauss, after having withdrawn from theology, could not for several years resolve on undertaking any larger literary work. He was not for this reason unoccupied. He read and studied

unremittingly, after his wont, but he never arrived at writing anything; he found no subject which could have attracted him strongly enough, and if he ever turned his attention to one, he speedily allowed it to drop again. The first thing by which he recalled himself to the memory of the reading world after his 'Doctrine of Faith,' was a discourse which he delivered to his Heilbronn friends, and which he published with the addition of his authorities, entitled, 'The Romanticist on the Throne of the Cæsars, or Julian the Apostate;' a spirited historical picture, but at the same time the most acute and most striking political satire; all the more striking the less that could be said against the fidelity of the historical representation, and the more tangibly that in every line the parallel aimed at forced itself upon the reader, without the mention of any name.

Yet he had already begun a more comprehensive work. A collection of letters from the Swabian poet Schubart, which had been consigned to him, gave him occasion to bestow his attention more fully upon this man, who had an especial interest for him from his

fate, as the victim of royal despotism, and still more from his simple, good-hearted, burly and sanguine nature, and whose poems and history had been known to him, moreover, from his early boyhood. By his industry he succeeded in increasing from other sources the number of letters and documents; with the material, the impulse to turn it to account became stronger, and thus arose 'Schubart's Life in his Letters,' as the first of those attractive biographical delineations which from henceforth for fifteen years almost exclusively claimed Strauss's literary labour, and afforded him plentiful opportunity for proving in innocent material, remote from all theological dispute, not only the profoundness of his research, but at the same time the versatility of his culture, the grace and ability of his diction, and his rare gift for artistic arrangement. About the beginning of the year 1848, Schubart was sent to press; but after a few weeks the outbreak of the political storms brought the printing to a stop, and it was not till the following year that the work appeared in two volumes.

The agitations of 1848 affected meanwhile

the life of our friend in other ways. When in the March of this year the German people passsed in review their best and most distinguished men, in order to send them to Frankfort, many thought that Strauss also would not be absent from the assembly, which was to establish a new order of things for Germany. He himself, it is true, was at first not of this opinion; not merely, as he wrote to me on March 27, because he could never consent to a popular speech in an electoral assembly, but also because he could not perceive in himself any inclination for such a position. This entire political movement, with its restless ferment, was to him still too problematic in its results for him to have any desire to mingle in it, apart from the fact that there was something unpleasant in it to a man of contemplative life like himself. Yet he could not, after all, resist the requests of his Ludwigsburg fellow-citizens, who offered him the candidateship of their district, and even his disinclination to election speeches was so far overcome that he delivered a great many of them both at Ludwigsburg and other

places; and had it only depended on this town itself, there would have been no doubt of his success. But among the country population the reputation of unchristian tenets stood in his way, and thus the pietistic agitation, which was supported by the majority of the Evangelical clergy, succeeded in preventing his election, and in effecting that of a wrong-headed fanatic, who subsequently became troublesome enough to his own party by his eccentric fancies.

Strauss published his election speeches under the title 'Six Theological Political Popular Speeches;' and popular speeches in the best sense they were; true models of luminous and generally intelligible matter, full of political discernment, advocating the confederation under Prussian rule, and moderation in the demands for freedom, in the dignified tone of a man who seeks no honour for himself, but who places his energies at the service of the community. One effect of the experiences made by Strauss on this occasion was the conviction which he expresses in the preface to his popular speeches,

that direct elective proceedings hold good all the less the more unlimited is the right of election.

Strauss's failure at the election produced such an excited feeling in Ludwigsburg against his adversaries that he found himself obliged to deliver another speech in a popular assembly for the sake of quieting the minds of the people. All the less would his fellow-citizens see themselves deprived of the honour of being represented by him in the Würtemberg Diet; and as here the town had to choose for itself alone, his election took place with great unanimity in May 1848. When, however, Strauss quitted Munich in September, having spent the summer there, and arrived at Stuttgart to take his place in the Diet just opened, it was apparent only too soon that the scruples which had prevented him at first from accepting the post of deputy had not been groundless. With his temperate and moderate political opinions, with his aversion to all that was indistinct, wordy, and tumultuous, with the critical mistrust which was always provoked in him by the self-satisfaction of a prevailing current of opinion,

Strauss was not the man to follow in the track of public opinion, which at that time in Würtemberg, as in the whole of South-west Germany, was inclined more and more to radicalism. He expressed this with his wonted fearlessness, both in the Diet and in public papers; and he thus brought upon himself, as was to be expected, not merely passionate attacks from the radical party, but he perplexed many of his former friends. He was especially blamed for having expressed himself frankly in the Chamber of Deputies with regard to the licentious conduct of the press, and for having, in a very excited discussion on the shooting of R. Blum, excused the proceeding of the Austrian court-martial, and severely condemned that of the delinquent. A summons to resign his office which he consequently received from Ludwigsburg was refused by him with firmness, declaring that he had acted in obedience to the principles which he had distinctly expressed before his election, that he had never been a complier with popular opinion, and that for his own part he was indeed much inclined to give up his post of deputy, but that so long

as only a small fraction of his electors desired that he should do so, he did not feel justified in taking the step.

After a few weeks, however, he was obliged to accept the conviction that he could not longer remain in a legislative assembly which was carried further and further on the precipitous path of radicalism, in which he saw himself driven to the right with his old adversary, Wolfgang Menzel, and in all more important divisions regularly in the minority with nobles and prelates. And when on one occasion he received an undeserved call to order for an attack upon the radicals, he announced his retirement from the Chamber and his renunciation of all the pay appertaining to him; and this step he vindicated in a letter to his electors, dated December 23, 1848, by showing the hopelessness of his further influence in the community. He himself was conscious that in so doing he had only acted in accordance with his nature; and if he had previously had no high opinion of the political ability of the masses, this idea could only be strengthened in him by all that he had observed and

experienced during this year. While the course of things had produced upon him in general a depressing effect, and while he found as little to praise on the one side as on the other, the democratic party inspired him with a feeling of still deeper aversion than their absolutist adversaries. 'The affairs of Germany,' he wrote on May 30, 1849, 'are in a condition which could not possibly be more lamentable. On the right and left, with princes and demagogues, there is just as little judgment as there is probity, and the threatening breach is really only delayed because the hopelessness on both sides is too great. My confession of faith in this disorder is briefly stated. I was sincerely in favour of supporting a true constitutionalism, a fixed unity with the utmost possible forbearance of existing things; if this, however, cannot be, and if I have only to choose between the despotism of the prince and the masses, I am unhesitatingly in favour of the former. . . . You may denounce me as a heretic in consequence, but I cannot do otherwise; the last drop of blood in me abhors the authority of demagogues as the extreme of all evils.' This

was in him indisputably a well-considered political conviction; but it was at the same time also the deep, inner aversion of his ideal, sensitive, and tender nature—of a nature which, with all its *bourgeois* simplicity, was noble in the best sense of the word—to the noise and rudeness of the public mart and to the dominion of the phraseology, the vague instincts, and the indiscreet passions of the masses.

CHAPTER VI.

LITERARY LABOURS.

STRAUSS now settled himself at Munich, and lived there again as solitary and retired as he had before done in Stuttgart, delighting in the art treasures, those of the Glyptothek especially, and limiting his intercourse to a small number of acquaintances, among whom he associated most intimately and frequently with the Orientalist Neumann and his family. In the autumn of 1851, when he took possession of his children, he removed with them, first to Weimar, where with Adolph Schöll, his old college friend, he indulged in the remembrances of the golden age of German poetry, and traced the reminiscences of Goethe, whose warm admirer he had ever been; and in the following summer he proceeded to Cologne, where his brother resided. He obtained female assist-

ance for the management of his small *ménage*, which he now again organised, and for the care of his children. Their education he himself directed with love and ability; and if one or another of his more intimate friends paid him a visit, he was sure to find in him an agreeable host.

In the early part of his Munich life Strauss had sought in vain for a suitable theme for the literary work which had again become a necessity to him. He thought of a criticism or critical history of Christian morals; then of a monograph on Diderot; but the latter, on closer acquaintance with his works, failed to attract him so much as to induce him to write more about him than an article in the morning papers (May 1849); the former deterred him by the mass and scattered nature of the material, which he felt himself utterly inadequate to gather together. For the collection of materials, he asserted, was unusually difficult to him, not only from his disinclination for the task, but also from his want of skill. The only thing, he declared, which afforded him pleasure in a work was composition; the preparatory

compilation of material was nothing but a sad necessity to him because it refused him free composition; and it was all the more sad because it caused him far more trouble than it did others. The latter was certainly not true. Strauss worked as a scholar very readily and quickly, and at the same time with unusual accuracy and profoundness; but it may have been that his artistic nature rendered the compilation of material, at first formless, a more unpleasant task than to those to whom the completeness and trustworthiness of the material is the principal thing, and the literary form merely an accessory. It is only, he says, when he feels the clay softening in his hand, when he feels it readily and to a certain extent of itself assuming the form which his fingers are giving to it, that he is conscious of the enjoyment of his talent; and this moreover is certainly the talent that peculiarly belongs to him.

Whilst he was again looking about him for some suitable work, after having made a few short journeys in the summer of 1849, a painful event brought him suddenly the task he required. This was the death of his

friend Märklin. He was just expecting a visit from him at Munich, when, instead, the tidings arrived that he had sunk under a rapid attack of typhus fever on October 18. The resolve was speedily made to raise a larger and more lasting monument to his friend than the necrology in the Swabian 'Mercury'; and in less than a year the biography was ready, which possesses all the greater value for us as it contains, with the history of Märklin's youth, that also of his biographer, as it makes the reader acquainted with the tender side of the nature of both, and affords him an insight into the way in which the two friends, amid internal and external impediments, worked their way to their scientific opinions.

That Strauss had difficulty in finding a publisher for this work marks the effect exercised by the political agitation, and by the political theological reaction upon literature, that followed it. Nor was he satisfied with the reception which it met with, so far as it undoubtedly contributed to correct the prejudices prevailing against him. He received the impression that his works were in

longer read; he resolved therefore no longer to write; and for the next few years he produced in consequence only works of a smaller size, which are to be found in the first part of the 'Kleine Schriften' among earlier and later productions of a similar kind.

The plan of a popular theological work in the form of a Dictionary, which he had entertained for some time, was again relinquished. It was not till 1854 that he again undertook a somewhat larger task in the biography of the poet and philologist, 'Nicodemus Frischlin,' which appeared in the autumn of 1855. This life of a talented man, who, in the want of moderation that characterised him, met with a tragic end, from a concatenation of personal error, antagonistic attacks, and unfortunate circumstances, forms a counterpart to the life of the Swabian poet, who could equally little control a nature similarly disposed, and who presents in his history many points of affinity with the other.

Drawn as it is with careful investigation from a mass of published as well as unpublished and hitherto unused documents (the difficult deciphering of which, especially of

Frischlin's letters, occasioned great labour), it is a highly valuable contribution to the history of culture and literature in Germany in the 16th century; and the accurate analysis of Frischlin's different writings, which Strauss imposed upon himself, will be all the more welcome to those who use the book for its scientific interest, the more difficult it is to obtain a part of those writings, and the more wearisome it is to read them. But skilfully as these abstracts are made, and little as this work also lacks the well-known excellences of Strauss's style, its subject was too remote from the interest of the bulk of the public, and the matter was in itself too heavy, for it ever to become as popular as the other works of its author.

The latter meanwhile, in the autumn of 1854, had quitted Cologne, which afforded him permanently few literary resources and too little scientific intercourse, and had settled at Heidelberg, where he spent six years. He had sent his son to a school at Oehringen, a few miles from Heilbronn, where some intimate friends resided. His daughter was educated in their new place of abode at

Fräulein Heidel's boarding school, in whose principal both father and daughter found a true friend; and he himself in his note-book reckons the years during which he watched her growing up beside him under the care of excellent beings, as among the quietly happiest of his life. For his own part he returned to his former simple bachelor life; yet he so arranged matters that he could lodge a friend and could have his son with him in the holidays. As far as his work was concerned, the University library afforded him all the assistance necessary; and in the academical circles he had rich opportunity for agreeable and profitable society. Strauss enjoyed friendly intercourse with most of the scientific notabilities of the Heidelberg of that period, with Schlosser, Vangerow, R. von Mohl, Haüsser, R. Bunsen, and others, outside the University, with the historian Weber, with the thoughtful and free-thinking minister Zittel, and a few others; but he most closely attached himself to Kuno Fischer and Gervinus, though he did not indeed agree with the latter either in musical, æsthetic, or subsequently in political matters, highly as he ranked him on

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account of his rich and powerful mind, his great cultivation, and his pure and noble character: and both intimacies were all the more valuable to him as the wives of his friends entered with interest and intelligence into his intercourse with their husbands. For intercourse with cultivated women was a necessity to a nature as æsthetically inclined as his, and endowed with the liveliest susceptibility of all that was beautiful and agreeable; and in this society, in which he moved with the most natural refinement, he unfolded the tender side of his nature no less than the brilliant qualities of his mind with a charm which it was difficult to withstand.

In December 1856 Fischer went to Jena. On the other hand, at about this time, Julius Meyer (now director of the Berlin Museum) became increasingly intimate with Strauss; but he also quitted Heidelberg before the latter. Strauss's new place of abode was likewise very favourably situated for visits to and from foreign friends, and for the summer tours which he delighted in making with his children in their holidays; and the charming neighbourhood of the place afforded oppor-

tunity for enjoyable walks and excursions. Many things concurred to make the years which he spent in Heidelberg both agreeable and satisfactory.

His labours also prospered amid these surroundings. The publication of Frischlin was scarcely completed when he had already begun to collect materials for the life of Ulrich von Hütten, in which he was obligingly assisted by Böcking, who was at that time just occupied with his excellent edition of Hütten's works, and by these common studies was brought into connection with him The new work itself appeared in the autumn of 1857 in two volumes, and in 1871 in a second abridged form. The 'Discourses of Ulrich von Hütten' was added to the first edition three years afterwards as a third part, being a translation of all Hütten's written discourses, with the exception of the three earliest, accompanied with explanatory remarks. Strauss had here chosen a far more important subject than in any of his earlier biographical works. A man surpassed by no other of the heroes of the Reformation age in boldness and freedom of mind, in whose

struggles not merely the weightiest religious movement is reflected, and in great measure consummated, but at the same time also one of the weightiest scientific, political, and national movements which the history of our people has known; a life, compared with which that of a Märklin is only like an innocent idyll, and that of a Schubart or a Frischlin like a storm in a pond compared with one in the open sea. An essential advantage to the biographer lay also in the fact that the subject in question was not merely a man of thought, but also of action; that he possessed a fresh, vigorous nature, not without perhaps a tinge of ferocity, and that his life was connected with an historical course of events which, through exciting catastrophes and alternating failures and successes, led to an issue of agitating tragic effect. If the historian would suit himself to such material, he must handle it in a grander style than the preceding ones. And this he actually did. Basing his work on the comprehensive and accurate study of all reliable sources, Strauss sketched in his Hütten a picture of the development, career, and fate of the man; of the

efforts, the doings, and the more important characters of the humanistic circle to which he belonged, and at the same time of the violent agitation of the period in which he exerted so powerful an influence—a picture which attracts and fascinates us all the more, the more warmly the personal interest of the author in his hero becomes apparent, and the less he conceals the fact that he desires to bring home to the reader the parallel between the vocation and struggles of the sixteenth and those of the nineteenth century—a parallel inherent in his subject, and obtruding itself naturally from the pure historical recital—and that he desires to address to our own age, through Hütten, the exhortations which Hütten addressed to his own. He himself expressed this intention in the preface to the second edition. He draws a parallel between the circumstances under which his Hütten first saw the light, 'the years in which Germania lay in profound weakness after the exhaustion of an abortive childbirth, in which great and small oppressors had again become masters of her,' and 'the period of the concordats, those slavish contracts with Rome,'

in which Austria took precedence, and all the South German governments were ready to follow. 'I cried,' he exclaims, 'is there no Hütten here? and because there was none among the living, I undertook to revive the image of the dead, and to place it before the eyes of the German people.' 'But even now,' he adds, in the days of the Frankfort peace, 'after Germany has again an emperor, and stands at the head of the nations, Hütten is not to be invited to the triumphal feast as an idle visitor, but in order to help forward the great tasks that still lie before us, to assist us in building up the structure of German unity and freedom, and in fighting against the spiritual Rome and against the enemies to enlightenment even in Protestant Germany.' He had always conceived, he declared, Germany's power and greatness, in which he gloried, as grounded on free human mental culture, narrowed by no clergy and no ecclesiastical laws; and, as in the war just concluded, he would have fought among the foremost against the outward foe, so he would now again fight among the foremost against the internal foes of freedom and culture. It

was this same valiant nature in his hero, this untameable desire for free human and national devolopment, weakened by no theological interests, and limited by no dogmatic hypotheses, by which Hütten attracted his biographer beyond all other great men of the time of the Reformation, and in which he felt himself inwardly allied to him. The biography of Hütten was just the subject he desired; that of Luther, which Gervinus desired should follow it, he speedily relinquished, though he had at first inclined towards it.

The tone of feeling which had imbued Strauss's mind during his occupation with Hütten's works, expressed itself with cutting severity in the ample preface which he affixed in May 1860 to his translation of the 'Discourses.' 'What would Hütten say to our present age?' he asks; and he then proceeds to a review of the Catholicism, and to a still more thorough review of the Protestantism, of the present day, which passes into a harsh condemnation of modern theology and Church matters. Of no party, Strauss here declares, does one like to say the sincere truth. In reality, no cultivated man, whether clergyman

or layman, believes any longer in the dogmas of the Church, whether he is conscious of it or not; no more believes in any of the New Testament miracles, from the supernatural conception to the Ascension. What use therefore in prevarication? Why indulge hypocrisy to others and to ourselves? Why not openly speak the truth? Why not mutually confess that we can perceive nothing in the Biblical stories but fiction and truth, and in the dogmas of the Church nothing but significant symbols; but that we remain attached with unalterable reverence to the moral value of Christianity, and to the character of its founder, so far as the human form is recognisable amid the accumulation of miracles in which its first biographers have enveloped it? Yet can we, after all, venture to call ourselves Christians? 'I know not,' answers Strauss, 'but does it then depend on the name? This know I, that we shall then only again become true, honest, and undistorted, and therefore better men than hitherto. We shall remain Protestants; in fact, we shall then only be true Protestants.'

With this tone of feeling it cannot excite

surprise if a plan which he had conceived about the beginning of the year 1858, soon after the completion of Hütten's biography, of writing a series of biographies of German poets—Klopstock, Lessing, Wieland, Herder, Goethe, and Schiller—was speedily relinquished. Klopstock, as he soon found, was not sympathetic to him; the one, however, of his contemporaries who was so to the highest degree, and whose portrait we should above all have wished to possess from his masterly hand, was just at that time the subject of a biography by A. Stahr, whose work satisfied Strauss in the main matter, and seemed for the present to render his own superfluous. He therefore let the matter rest, after having prepared two fragments on Klopstock, one of which he published in 1862, with various other small works in the first part of his 'Kleine Schriften;' and the other, and far larger one, the pleasing and instructive 'History of Klopstock's Youth,' he published in 1866, in the second part of the same work. With regard to the other contents of these two collections, as they have not been hitherto touched upon, we may mention the study

upon A. W. Schlegel,[1] written in the year 1849; the article upon King William of Würtemberg;[2] and the six political and three non-political 'Discourses' written in the years 1863 and 1865.[3] It was, however, not merely disinclination to occupy himself for any length of time with Klopstock, and with any work referring solely to the history of literature, which made him so speedily stop short in his intended biographies of the poets to return to Hütten in the translation of the 'Discourses;' but it was at the same time the re-awakening of an inclination which from time to time he had indeed imagined had wholly died within him. In his Hütten he had again approached the theological questions which he had never entirely lost sight of; and the longer his mind wandered within their range, the stronger was the attraction which they again exercised over him. Even in the preface to the 'Discourses,' the strength of this newly-awakened theological interest is not to be mistaken; and the point in the direction in which it was first to turn is plainly pointed

[1] I. 122 et seq. [2] 1864; II. 270 et seq.
[3] II. 381 et seq.

out when, alluding to the five-and-twenty years' jubilee of the 'Life of Christ,' he proceeds to examine the subsequent course and present position of the investigations which it had prompted, and declares in conclusion that the work was not laid aside, but was steadily advancing.

The same tendency of mind is exhibited in the studies and reflections in the work on Hermann Samuel Reimarus (1862). Strauss here depicts to us with his usual masterly power his most remarkable predecessor in the eighteenth century, and he gives a highly instructive and accurate account of that work of Reimarus (still unpublished as a whole) which Lessing took from the Wolfenbüttel fragments, at the same time exhibiting the relation between the Biblical criticism of Reimarus and his own. In these explanations we find him again decidedly in theological waters; his 'Reimarus' was an incidental production in his preparatory labours for a work in which he was steering back towards the investigations which had first made his name famous, namely, 'The Life of Christ treated for the German People.'

CHAPTER VII.

THEOLOGICAL WORKS.

WHILST he had himself withdrawn from theological matters, the investigations to which he had given so powerful an impetus had not been standing still; and if, generally speaking—so far as they are scientifically to be taken into consideration—they moved on the same fundamental basis of historical criticism as his own, a tendency was nevertheless given to them by his teacher Baur, which in its treatment as well as in its results served to complete and correct his own investigations. He had been among the first to aim at a separation of the non-historical elements from the Gospel narratives; but the question how this non-historical element had found its way into them he had satisfied himself with answering in the manner before described (page 43), by referring it to the unintentionally-

devised legends and the mythical imagination of the earliest Christian communities.

'Baur found himself by no means satisfied either with this answer or with the manner in which Strauss had proceeded in his criticism. He believed that every investigation of the contents of the Gospel writings ought to be preceded by the investigation of these writings themselves, of the tendency which biassed them, and of the period and circumstances of their composition. In this investigation he did not, however, desire to limit himself to the Gospels; and in carrying it out he had not originally started with them, but with the Epistles of St. Paul and the Acts of the Apostles; he extended it rather to all the New Testament writings, and even beyond these to the entire Christian literature of the first two centuries; and whilst he combined with this all that the earliest Church history and that of doctrinal theology afforded him, he arrived at the opinion that the development of Christianity at this period, from the fundamental antagonism of Judaism and Paulinism, had been accomplished amid

many internal struggles and manifold attempts at reconciliation, and that the different phases of these events are marked out to us by the writings which we possess both within and without our New Testament works. In this process the Gospels also have each their assigned place; and in the fourth Gospel especially we perceive the work which in a dogmatic point of view brought this to a relative conclusion, presenting in the most complete and ideal form the theological opinions of the Christian Church as they existed about the middle of the second century; for this very reason, however, this Gospel, less than all the others, is to be regarded as an authentic source of Gospel history, but throughout only as a free composition guided by dogmatic principles. If by this all that men had hitherto believed they knew with regard to the Founder of Christianity was thus in great measure called in question, Baur sought on the other hand to place Christianity itself in the light of a truly historical examination, exhibiting not merely in the Jewish, but also in the Hellenist and Hellenistic world the civilised conditions from

which it had emanated as the natural fruit of the previous development of mind.[1]

Strauss had followed these investigations and the writings in which they were conducted by Baur and his disciples with great interest from the first, and to many questions of importance he had given his assent; Baur's 'Treatise on the Gospel of St. John,' for instance, which he highly admired, had at once produced the impression on him that it had solved the mystery of this most remarkable Gospel. Not merely were the books and treatises of the Tübingen school now again examined, and this more completely than hitherto, but every study was made which seemed to be necessary for the renewed treatment of the subject. About the beginning of the year 1864 the new 'Life of Jesus' appeared, and in the same year, in spite of the size of the first edition, a second was required. The difference both in form and purport between it and the former work of the same name was not inconsiderable. If

[1] I have more fully expressed myself on this point and on its connection with Strauss's 'Leben Jesu' in my 'Vorträgen und Abhandl.,' p. 284 et seq.; 322 et seq.; and 412 et seq.

the one was designed exclusively for theologians, the other was addressed expressly to the German people; and as Strauss stated in the dedication to his deceased brother, he had also those in view who, without any learning of their own, have manifested interest and freedom of mind in investigations of the kind. The range of his work was therefore somewhat smaller, and the learned material which was placed before the reader was more limited than in the first work; still it was ever a far too profound and accurate scientific investigation for it to claim, in spite of its lucid and pleasing style, a popularity of the same kind as that obtained by Renan's lighter work, which appeared at the same time, with its florid language, its sentimental rhetoric, and its romantic colouring, and completion of the historical course of events.

In its purport, the second 'Life of Jesus' went essentially beyond the first. While the latter was chiefly limited to the question as to the correctness of the Gospel narratives, and to the authentication of their non-historical elements, and had only added in the concluding dissertation a criticism of Ecclesi-

astical Christology and its more recent transformations, Strauss, it is true, entirely excluded these dogmatic discussions from the plan of his second work ; on the other hand, however, he entered far more comprehensively into the historical task of the Gospel criticism than in the first work. Agreeing with Baur in all essential points, he investigated the question of the origin, the connection, and the character of our four Gospels; he supplemented his criticism, to which it had not without justice been objected that it left off at a merely negative result, with a sketch of the 'Life of Jesus,' which was intended to establish what could be stated with more or less certainty after the withdrawal of the non-historical traditions, with regard to the person, teaching, ministry, intentions and fate of the Founder of our religion; and only after this positive statement of the historical element which lies at the foundation of the Gospel records, he introduced, in harmony with his former work, the criticism of the non-historical traditions and the investigation of their origin and formation.

As regards its form, this part of the work,

in which Strauss enters with the greatest ease and ability into critical discussions long familiar to him, is certainly the most perfect. Newer material is, however, afforded by the preceding positive investigation respecting the person and the history of Christ; and if we can for once reconcile our minds to the removal of all that is miraculous from this history, we shall be obliged to confess that it is here handled not merely very circumspectly and profoundly, but also with the reverence due to it. Even on the point in which his mythical interpretation had been most found fault with—namely, the Resurrection of Christ, he had already in 'Reimarus'[1] expressed himself more reasonably than could have been expected from one who was not able to admit of a miracle here any more than elsewhere. For as he constantly affirmed that a deception was in this case out of the question, and that it was not the visions of Christ which produced the disciples' belief in the Resurrection, but that these were far rather themselves a result of this belief, a form which it assumed to their own consciousness, so he

[1] P. 281 et seq.

declares, with regard to its significance, that it was, it is true, a delusion, 'yet a delusion comprising within itself a vast amount of truth. That not the visible, but the invisible, not the earthly, but the heavenly, not the flesh, but the spirit, is the true and essential matter, and the truth which has transformed the history of the world, first became the common property of mankind in the form of the belief in the Resurrection of Christ.'

In the 'Life of Jesus,' it is true, we find no equally distinct declaration on this point; but of this work also it must be allowed that it unreservedly acknowledges the Founder of the Christian religion in His human greatness, and setting aside other passages, we have only to compare the section on the religious consciousness of Christ[1] in order to convince ourselves how little the author fell short of a due understanding of the grandeur and purity of a religious character.

Two smaller works followed the 'Life of Jesus,' one of which was written in the same year and the other in the following spring, namely, 'The Christ of Faith and the Jesus

[1] P. 204 et seq.

of History,' and 'The Halves and the Wholes.' The first of these works is a criticism of Schleiermacher's 'Lectures on the Life of Jesus' which had just appeared; the second is a controversial treatise directed against Schenkel and Hengstenberg. That the criticism should prove throughout luminous and convincing was to be expected beforehand. It surprises us more when, in the polemical treatise, we see the orthodox fanatic, his old and passionate adversary, sharply as his apologetic extravagances are proved, personally treated by Strauss far more gently than a theologian who in his opinions approximated to him so closely, and who thus had drawn upon himself such violent enmity from the orthodox party, as Schenkel had done.

But in the case before us, personal and real grounds concurred to give this tone of unsparing acrimony to his controversy. On the one side he entertained a profound repugnance to all ambiguity and all false reconciliation in scientific matters; he could not endure any mitigation of his own regardlessly energetic criticism, and he received it as a

personal offence that Schenkel's 'Charakterbild Jesu' should be placed on a level with his book in public discussions. On the other hand he could not forgive his adversary for having formerly come forward against Kuno Fischer, while at the same time he was himself provoked by the misplaced zeal with which Schenkel's friends endeavoured to separate their cause from his, and by injurious attacks upon him to place themselves in a better light. It is not without interest to hear Strauss at the conclusion of his polemical treatise declare, with reference to the question before discussed—namely, belief in the Resurrection of Christ—that Christianity in its original form perishes, it is true, with this fact, and indeed has already perished with it.

If we ask whether Christianity itself is so intertwined with this form, or rather with this aggregate of its forms, that they cannot be surrendered without a renunciation of Christianity, it is indeed but a strife about words and names, the deciding of which still lies in the distance. 'That which, however, may be established, is this: If Christianity be truth,

it cannot require untruth for its support; whatever in it needs such a support is not its truth, but is the error contained in it; what is left, when these supports fall, with the errors they uphold—we believe, however, that somewhat, and not indeed a little, is left—that alone is the truth of Christianity. In this itself,' and with this dilemma Strauss here concludes, 'lies the choice, whether it will stand with its truth, contracted as it becomes, or will perish with its untruth, while imagining that it cannot part with it.'

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CONFESSION OF FAITH.

When Strauss was engaged on the works just mentioned, he had already long quitted Heidelberg. He had at first in the autumn of 1860 gone for some time to Berlin, in order to consult Gräfe about a troublesome complaint in his eyes, a double sight, which was removed by means of an operation, and he had then removed his place of abode to Heilbronn, in order to have his son, while he was attending the gymnasium there, under his own immediate care; his household affairs were managed by his daughter, who had meanwhile grown up, and he thus after long privation enjoyed in a manner most delightful to him the comfort of a home of his own with his two children, which gave occasion moreover for more lively intercourse with intimate friends. When, however, in November 1864,

his daughter married Herr Heusler, Director of Mines in Bonn (now Chief Director of the Mining Department), whilst his son had gone a year previously to the University, he gave up his abode at Heilbronn, and went for the winter to Berlin, where he had no lack of older and younger friends; among those with whom he here chiefly associated, in addition to Vatke, was his Swabian fellow-countryman and old pupil, Berthold Auerbach.

During the spring and summer he visited by turns Heidelberg, Baden-Baden, and Munich, and stayed with his daughter at Biebrich and afterwards at Bonn; and at last, in the autumn of 1865, after long wavering, he took up his abode at Darmstadt, which, in addition to its library and theatre, recommended itself to him from its freedom from noise and from the woods in its vicinity. Here he remained for seven years, until the autumn of 1872, with the exception of the winters of 1867 and 1868, which he passed in Munich, in intercourse with his friend Julius Meyer, and occasional lengthy visits to his daughter and the grandchildren with which she had gladdened him; and in the summer, as a rule, a few

weeks which he spent, for his health's sake, most gladly in her society, on the banks of Lake Constance, or in some other suitable place. Standing alone, as he now again did, he lived all the more retired as the circle of his acquaintances in his new abode was at first very limited; so much so, that he himself remarked, on a visit to his daughter, that he had so thoroughly given himself up to the enjoyment of her filial tenderness, and her firmly established domestic happiness, that it would require some time before he could accustom himself again to his solitude. In time, however, nearer personal relations formed themselves round him; and the intercourse he enjoyed from 1867 with Her Royal Highness, Princess Alice of England, the consort of Prince Louis of Hesse, was of special importance to him. Through her he became also personally acquainted with her Imperial Highness, the Crown Princess of Prussia and Germany; and the gracious interest which the two intelligent and noble ladies showed in him to the end was among the brightest and most gratifying experiences of his later life, and cast a ray of light, as

he gratefully boasted, even into his sick-room.

Even in Darmstadt he continued his scientific and literary employments in his wonted manner, although the state of his eyes was a hindrance to him, especially in the winter. He had from the first a work in view which was intended to exhibit definitively his theological and philosophical convictions, a confession of faith as he also called it; and with this idea he studied whatever seemed suitable to his purpose in the modern philosophical literature with which he was still unacquainted. Nevertheless some time elapsed before this idea had assumed a definite form in his mind, and as no other greater task lay just then before him, a pause of several years occurred in Strauss's literary labours, which was only interrupted in 1866 by the second part of the 'Kleine Schriften,' before alluded to (p. 105); and when he again undertook something new, it was not even then at first the proposed 'Confession of Faith,' but a biographical production, which, however, stands in similar relation to it, as the work on Reimarus had before done to

the second revision of the 'Life of Jesus.' As he had preceded this work by a monograph on a German predecessor of the eighteenth century, he found himself now impelled to a thorough study and a monographical delineation of the man who at the same time, in France, had expressed and influenced with more brilliant talent and success than any other the position of French enlightenment with regard to Christianity—namely, *Voltaire.* If the subject of this work was suggested to him by the whole tendency of his studies at that time, its form was determined by its special personal purpose. The six lectures on Voltaire are real lectures which were written for the Princess Alice, and were listened to by her; and with reference to this circumstance, when they were published, they were dedicated to her; and this their purpose was at all events not without its influence in leading their author, without detracting from their historical profoundness, to surpass himself in the spirited eloquence and lucid perspicuity of his style, and to give us in them the most perfect biographical work of art which our literature possesses, after Goethe's

Truth and Fiction. As such they have been acknowledged by the reading world; the first edition had scarcely appeared (1870) than a second became immediately necessary, and this was followed in 1872 by a third, a success which could only be enjoyed by a work upon the French poet and critic, with whom few at the present day in Germany are acquainted, in consequence of such unusually attractive handling.

No small approval was enjoyed by a little work which suggested itself to Strauss through the outbreak of the Franco-German War. While, from the experiences he had made in 1848, he had abstained from any attempt at personal political activity, still, as may be readily supposed, he followed the course of public affairs with an interest, the traces of which may be perceived in his writings. Thus, for instance, the pretty lecture upon Lessing's 'Nathan' (1864) had a political motive; and with this Strauss opened a series of lectures which were delivered at his desire in 1861 at Heilbronn, in behalf of the German fleet. When in 1863 the new phase in the destinies of Germany began with the Schles-

wig-Holstein War, he expressed himself in the political 'Discourses'[1] upon the position and vocation of Germany; and if he could not, as is readily conceivable, under the existing state of things, overcome the general mistrust felt by the Liberal party against the leader of the Prussian policy, his conviction of the vocation of Prussia in Germany is not at any rate to be doubted. This mistrust was brilliantly refuted by the year 1866; and Strauss belonged to those who welcomed with the most untroubled delight the new turn of affairs in his country, and looked confidently towards the future to repair the deficiencies which still adhered to the work of that year. When the decisive contest of 1870 promised to bring this hope nearer its goal, he addressed a letter in the Augsburg 'Allgemeine Zeitung' to Ernst Renan, who in a letter suggested by his 'Voltaire' had expressed his opinion to him also with regard to the war, and he here made the attempt to explain to the French scholar and at the same time to the world generally the recent political and national development of our people; the true causes of the war.

[1] See above, p. 105.

and Germany's right in it; and when Renan's reply, and a contemporaneous article by him in the 'Revue des Deux Mondes,' showed how little even one of the most intelligent and just thinking of the French, even after the days of Gravelotte and Sedan, was able to conceive the true position of things, and to rise above the prejudices, self-delusions, and pretensions of his nation, he followed his first letter by a second, in which, with great perspicuity, he represented the state of the case, and proved the right and the necessity for Germany to take back the provinces wrung from her in the seventeenth century. The favourable reception awarded to these two letters, which he published separately, together with a translation of Renan's, under the title 'War and Peace,' contributed to induce him to carry out the idea of re-publishing his 'Hütten' in a more popular form, as has been already mentioned at page 98.

Had our friend concluded his literary career with these works, we should have received from them the impression that, after the violent contests which he had provoked in his earlier years by the boldness of his

theological criticism, his career had at last found a conciliatory conclusion in the lively concern he took in the political and national interests of his people. But to himself something would have been lacking to the completeness of his own life; he would have had the feeling of having a task imposed upon him by his convictions, had he not freely spoken out all that lay upon his heart with regard to our present age, and had he not attempted to fashion into a whole the views which resulted from his scientific opinions.

The idea of such a work he had, as we have already seen, long entertained, and had made studies for it. In 1871 he entered upon its execution, and in October 1872 appeared 'The Old and New Faith: a Confession.' How he himself intended this work to be regarded, and that he was as much in earnest in the 'Confession' as his pious adversaries could alone be in the confessions and evidences so familiar to them, he has thus expressed in a dedicatory letter which he appended to his book.[1]

[1] This letter, addressed in Latin to an old friend of his youth, was published soon after Strauss's death in the Vienna

'I have made the confession of faith,' he says, 'which God has ordered me to make. I have delivered my discourse from the beginning to the end. If I now die, it can no longer be said that I owe aught at my death to any age and to any nation. What I had I have given to them; what was still left

Neuen Freien Presse (1874, March 5, No. 3,421), in an interesting article on the last year and a half of his life, which is to be recommended to the notice of all future biographers of Strauss. I insert it here as a specimen of the excellent Latin which was at the command of its author:—

'Venit tandem, amice, nec se diutius exspectari patitur libellus meus novus, imo, nisi præsagia animi fallunt auctorem, novissimus. Sentio vires, non tam ingenii quam corporis, labare et serena mente dictum illud repeto:

'Vixi, et quem cursum dederat fortuna, peregi. Quod injunctum mihi a numine erat ut profiterer neque homines celarem, professussum: sermonem quasi meum a primo jam usque ad ultimum verbum recitavi. Non ultra dices, quando moriar, debitorem me æqualium aut nostralium esse moriturum. Quæ habebam, cum eis communicavi; libellus hic quidquid supererat continet. Sed dices forsitan, multa me omisisse, plura quam æquum sit in disputatione mea desiderari. Multa, fateor, omisi; sed non negligens, sed sciens ac volens. Res acu tangere, non penitus pertractare volui. Non docere ex cathedra, sed quasi libere conversari cum lectoribus mihi proposui. Se non satis eruditos a me esse si lectorum aliqui fortasse querentur, dolebo; sed si scintillas ex hominum animis undique excussisse hoc libello non dicar, tum demum male me scripsisse concedam. Ceterum de eventu libelli ecce me egregie securum. Quod debebam ut poteram fui: jam fiat quod potest; et sic debuisse fieri mihi persuadendo acquiescam. Ni vero, amicissime, vale et me amare perge.'

unsaid this work contains. . . . I have not the slightest anxiety as to its fate. What I had to do I have done to the best of my ability; happen now what will, I shall quiet myself in the conviction that it must have happened.'

Anyone who has known him and had intercourse with him, especially in the latter years of his life, will not doubt the sincerity of his statement. He intended in this work to make, as it were, his theological and philosophical testament, and to give the result of the labours and studies of his life both for himself and for others; and that this result might exhibit itself as purely as possible, and that no element foreign to its true purpose might hinder the vast influence of his work; that, as he wrote to me on October 17, 1872, and as he also expressed himself in the 'Neuen Freien Presse,' 'he might not again fall into the error of scholarly dulness which had proved the ruin of his new 'Life of Jesus,' he desired to disencumber it as much as possible from all substantial matter, and 'for this once to work freely and as it were without compass and rule.'

This he did with such masterly power; he so completely eradicated every trace of the labour which his work had caused him, and of the study which it had cost him, and he purified his rich material to such transparent clearness, that this his last principal work, considered as a work of art, occupies an equally distinguished position among his philosophical and theological writings as 'Voltaire' does among his biographical. He himself, it is true, was aware that what his work thus obtained in freshness and vigour must have been unavoidably purchased at the loss of completeness and symmetry; that a line of battle of such vast extent could not at the same time have been drawn up deeply; that weak points must have been left; and that only the daring feat of the whole could compensate for this deficiency in its parts. As such a point of weakness, which, in spite of repeated retouching, could never wholly satisfy him, he designated in one of his letters the beginning of the fourth section on Morals. 'Here,' he writes immediately after the appearance of the work, 'a couple of solid beams have still to be inserted, and if you could sup-

ply me with a few oak, or even pine stems, you would deserve my sincere thanks. The work touches me too closely for me to take counsel with myself respecting it.'

If, however, we are inclined on this account to regard it as the hastily written production of a passing tone of feeling, we are decidedly in error. He is, indeed, fully justified when he guards against this in the lines found among the papers he has left behind :—

> 'Carelessly it seems expressed,
> Though not carelessly achieved ;
> Within a few weeks is compressed
> That which was through years conceived.'

The subject of the work at present under our consideration is too well known and is too fresh in remembrance for it to be necessary for us to enter more accurately into it here. The first two of the four sections into which it is divided gather together with great skill, clearness, and conciseness the essential purport of the objections which Strauss had opposed in his earlier writings, not merely to the positive Christian dogmas and historical narratives which form their bases, but

also to the belief in the personality of God and the personal existence after death, strengthening these objections here and there with further remarks; and from this is drawn the conclusion, that, of the two questions, 'Are we still Christians?' and 'Have we still any religion?' the first is simply to be answered in the negative, and the second, on the other hand, is, it is true, generally speaking, to receive an affirmative reply, but nevertheless only so far is the name of religion not refused to the feeling of an absolute dependence, and to that which arises from it, submission to the course of the world, inner freedom, and joyfulness of mind, when that feeling, as in Schleiermacher, refers to the greatness, perfection, legality, and rationality of the system of the world instead of a personal God.

The positive side of this criticism of the religious opinions hitherto existing, is afforded by the two following sections, which unfold the distinguishing features of the theory of life, which, according to the author's opinion, rests upon the position of the science of the present day. His guiding

point is the tracing back of the world to its natural causes, and of human action to its natural motives. For the first of these tasks Strauss makes use especially of two modern theories of physical science—that which Kant and Laplace advanced with regard to the origin of the solar system, and that which Darwin brought forward with regard to the origin of organic nature and of its various kinds; expressly, however, he admits with respect to the latter, that it is after all most defective, leaving infinitely much unexplained, and among these many principal and cardinal points; that it aims rather at future possible solutions than itself furnishing them. The doubt, however, that in this way he allows to fall upon materialism deters him all the less, as for his own part he believes materialism and idealism are only the mutually compensating forces required for the just theory of life, both of which have their common adversary in dualism; in a similar manner as he observes a just medium (p. 218. 143) between the kindred contrast of the mechanical and teleological interpretations of nature, on the one side agreeing with the Darwinian

idea that blind natural instinct can produce what is suited to its purpose, and on the other side according with the statement that, if the world is not the work of an absolutely wise and judicious personality, it is at any rate the workshop of judiciousness and wisdom. In his contemplation of human life he starts with the conviction that all moral action is a self-determination of the individual, according to the idea of the species; it consists in this, that it is realised in the man himself and is recognised in others; and with this is connected a discussion of the most important moral, social, and political questions, to which even adversaries can scarcely refuse the praise of a sound moral judgment and a pure and noble spirit. Two 'supplementary notices' upon our great poets and musicians touched upon æsthetic grounds, and no susceptible reader will follow the author's reflections without rich enjoyment and stimulated interest.

Such a work could not fail to excite the greatest sensation. The name of its author, the extent and importance of the questions it involved, the profusion of ideas, the keenness of the criticism, the clear, brilliant, and spirited

style, all combined to produce an attraction which was however counterbalanced in most by the repulsive effect of a theory of life which they could only consider as reprehensible and comfortless. And it was not merely the decided and fundamental adversaries of a free theological criticism who received this impression from Strauss's last work; but even from those on whose moderation and impartiality he had some reason to reckon, even from men of liberal views, both theologically and politically, he found, as a rule, but little approbation. Readily as they had submitted to the criticism of positive dogmas, they could not forgive him the cutting denial of the question, 'Are we still Christians?' nor the lively and regardless attacks upon convictions which rationalism and enlightened opinions could all the less willingly renounce, as they had already cast overboard so many and such important fragments of the original stock of dogmas. But even many of his hitherto more decided friends had their scruples at this new venture. Was this criticism of the old Faith with its negative results competent on all points? And admitted it were so; is *Chris-*

tianity in its profoundest nature and influence irrevocably linked to Christian *dogmatics*, and is religion allied to distinct dogmas? Must we renounce the idea of God as such if we become convinced of the insufficiency of the conceptions which we have formed in our own mind of God, from the analogy of the human nature? Does not the unity of the world ever pre-suppose one cause at work, and can we be satisfied to regard as such the blindly acting power of matter, if we, as Strauss himself says, 'must attribute to the cause that which we see in the effect,' and if in the effect, as he likewise admits, an infinite exuberance of spiritual life has lain from eternity, and will rest for all eternity to come? And is not the case similar in the narrower sphere of human consciousness? Is the question between materialism and spiritualism so insignificant that we should venture to divest ourselves of its decision? Is there any prospect, on the other hand, of explaining the manifestations of consciousness by the physical organism as such, or can the impossibility of this explanation be proved? These and similar questions might well deter many

who had gone a great way with Strauss from following him on the last step. A few undoubtedly, however, assumed this position, because even without more accurate investigation they were convinced of the inadmissibility of his position. The reception which his work received afforded, therefore a peculiar spectacle. On the one side it excited the most universal interest; in six months six large editions appeared, to which a seventh has now been added; a success which has indeed never attended any other theological or philosophical work in Germany. On the other hand, the public discussions of the work were almost without exception disapproving; and if the horror of the orthodox adversaries was mitigated by the sense of satisfaction that the dreaded critic had now fully unmasked himself in all his reprehensibility, the representatives of average theological liberalism pressed forward almost still more eagerly than the orthodox opponents to renounce all compromising association with a man whose opinions certainly went so far beyond their own, that he could from henceforth no longer reckon on their concurrence.

And, as it generally happens, this was not always done with the tact and consideration which a man like Strauss might have claimed. Men who in mind, knowledge, and achievement stood still further below him than in years, ventured to readjust his sketch as though he were a boy; what his 'confession' as such denoted with regard to himself, what assistance it could afford to the science of the present time by the questions it suggested and the tasks it proposed, was not taken into consideration. Among those however who were most qualified to appreciate it justly, few at first would or could take up the sword; and those who thoroughly examined it were obliged to confess that, in spite of the free and apparently slight treatment of the subject, it involved the refutation of long and laborious thought, which was not to be set aside by a few hastily-written journal articles, but the criticism of which, if it was to be conclusive, demanded nothing less than a new system of metaphysics. Thus it was that Strauss's last work, like his first, so far as may be drawn from the public expressions of opinion, was just as eagerly attacked as it was read, and

that in this contest he now in his old age stood as much alone as he had done at the beginning of his career.

But this he had not now expected. First and foremost in his work, the expression of his own conviction had been of importance to him; his critics could find in it, almost without exception, only one culpable attack upon their own opinions. This, perhaps, coolly considered, could not have greatly surprised him. But such a consideration was little to be expected from him at the first moment. Many as were the contests which he had challenged during his life with the utmost intrepidity, and which he had maintained with the greatest scientific courage, he had nevertheless, finely strung and sensitive as he was by nature, never become so storm-proof as not to look forward with suspense to the reception of his works, and not to be passionately excited by the attacks which they brought upon him. He was deeply grieved, and it required some time before he could regain his calm composure. But, as he writes to a friend,[1] 'The evil moment to him was at

[1] Neuen Freien Presse.

all times only that when he heard the cry, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson! and the hair of his head had not yet grown again.'

In the present case this happened quickly enough. At the second edition of his work he encourages himself with the martial words:—

> Up! time-worn warrior, hush thy fears,
> And gird thy loins for strife!
> Fierce contest marked thy early years,
> And it shall close thy life.

And on the last day of the year 1872 he finished a concluding address, which was at the same time to serve as a preface to the fourth and all succeeding editions of his work; a written defence of his opinions, which by its dignified and moderate bearing, by the noble modesty with which the celebrated author speaks of himself and his achievements, and by the calm and cultivated tone in which he answers injurious reproaches, must have produced a reconciling and softening impression upon many who were hostile towards him on account of his 'Confession.' All that he had done in his work, he says, was only to gather together thoughts which had long been ac-

knowledged separately. He had intended in it to bring to the consciousness of those like-minded with himself what we possess and what we do not possess. In placing before them the present state of our opinions and knowledge, of our incentives and tranquillising influences, he had desired at the same time to draw attention to the points in which these were still deficient. No dispute with those of contrary opinions, nothing but an understanding with those of like mind, had been his intention. Of such he had the right to demand by his 'Confession' that they should live up to their convictions, not accommodating themselves to other opinions, nor belonging to any Church; and in spite of all invectives, he remained convinced that in this 'Confession' he had done a good work, and had gained the thanks of a less prejudiced future. 'The time of agreement,' he says, in conclusion, 'will come, as it came to the "Life of Jesus," only that this time I shall not live to see it.'

CHAPTER IX.

ILLNESS AND DEATH.

THE presentiment expressed in these concluding words was only too soon to be realised. Strauss had left Darmstadt in October 1872, in order to return to his Swabian home. He had first thought of Stuttgart, where his son, soon after his successful return from the war, had received an appointment as military physician; finally, however, he had preferred his old Ludwigsburg avenues to the noise of the capital, which during the last thirty years had not a little increased. Here he arranged a small abode not far from the railway station. But soon after the beginning of the year 1873 there appeared foretokens of a malady which proclaimed itself in more decided symptoms as the spring advanced. It seemed at first a disorder of the bowels, which it was hoped would be remedied by Karlsbad; but when

he returned from thence at the end of May, there was no improvement, and his disorder appeared rather on the increase. Constant pains in the back and limbs impeded his walking, sitting, or lying, and deprived him of sleep. A rapid diminution of strength excited apprehension. While Strauss had hitherto looked younger than he was—his head thickly covered with brown hair, by degrees verging into grey; his face thin, as was its wont, but healthy and fresh in complexion; and his movements quick and vigorous, and only impeded by his short-sightedness—he now rapidly became the old man. I had last seen him in September 1872. When, eleven months afterwards, I visited him in his illness, I was alarmed at the visible traces of his great decline of strength; and I could no longer feel doubtful of his own just estimate of his condition when he, before by letters, and now by word of mouth, expressed the conviction that his life was only to be reckoned by months. His son treated him from Stuttgart, with the assistance of Elsässer, the director of the provincial board of health, an older physician of

some eminence, who had been a college friend of Strauss, and who died a few weeks after him. The nursing of the sick man was undertaken with devotion and care by Caroline Gerber, an old servant and friend of the family, whom he highly valued on account of her attachment and trustworthiness. But no medical skill or nursing could check the progress of the disease, which from a tumour in the bowels seemed to proclaim itself of a cancerous character, though its true nature could not be fully ascertained until after his death. The suffering and pain increased, his strength sank still lower; and though at one time there seemed a pause in the progress of the malady, the hope encouraged by it was speedily disappointed.

But in these very sufferings the mental greatness and moral strength of the sufferer proclaimed their most glorious victory. He was fully aware of his condition. With unshaken firmness he adhered to the convictions which he had openly acknowledged in his last work, and he never for a moment repented having written them. But with these convictions he met death with such repose,

and with such unclouded serenity of mind, that it was impossible to leave his sick-room without that impression of a moral sanctity which we all the more surely receive from greatness of soul and mastery of mind over matter, the stronger are the hindrances in the surmounting of which it is manifested. After he had become aware that his life was drawing to a close, his only anxiety had been to remain true to himself to the end, and amid physical pain and discomfort, so far as circumstances permitted, to retain his freedom of mind and intellectual activity, and to remove the sting from his suffering, by considering it in its connection with the general order of things. With life he had ended and cast behind him all the contests and vexations it had brought him; and in order not to have this frame of mind disturbed, ever since his illness had assumed a decided character he read absolutely nothing more of all that was written with respect to his last work. The letters of counsel with which, from want of judgment and importunity he was troubled, he laid aside unread. He reflected on his own life with the same objectivity as he had

before, as a biographer, considered that of his heroes, and he endeavoured to make plain to himself in the one, as he had done in the other, why his life had fashioned itself under the given conditions thus, and not otherwise. Yet he did not withdraw himself from the interest in life still possible to his condition; he made use of every tolerable moment for reading or for correspondence; he entered constantly with his old lively interest into the concerns and works of his friends; he repaid with kindly thanks every service that could be rendered to him; he extolled his fate in having a son as his physician, to whom in wearisome hours of suffering he could open his innermost nature, while their mutual relation thus reached its consummation. After his daughter's last visit he rejoiced in the twin grandchildren with which she had presented him; and he addressed sweet little poems to the little ones whom he was to see no more, but who, as he wrote to me at the close of the year in his last letter, hovered round him like two genii, brightening his sick-room. The poetic art, whose votary he had secretly been all his life, did not refuse her

gifts to the dying man. I have been permitted to insert here a few of these poems, which will exhibit his frame of mind far better than any delineation made by another. In the first place, therefore, may stand these lines to his son :—

Ever in the room of sickness,
  Like a morning star thou art ;
Suffer not such ray of brightness
  Too long from me to depart.

As to youth thou grew'st from boyhood.
  And from youth becam'st a man,
I shall gladly see completed
  What with promise fair began.

Though my powers have waxed feeble,
  Though my life is nearly run,
I have meanwhile gained possession
  Of a friend as well as son.

Only fear not ! do not tremble ;
  In the night-time stars appear,
And beside the bitterest waters
  Gushes forth a fountain clear.

Among the little poems suggested by the birth of his twin grandchildren the two following may be inserted :—

I.

TO MY DEAR DAUGHTER GEORGINE.

From the far-off spot I love
  Towards me the sweet rumour flies,
That a blessing twain enshrined
  In the tiny cradle lies !

Quickly into serious truth
Higher powers have changed our jest,
And instead of one fair boy,
Two are welcomed to thy breast.

Yes, be joyful ! let no care
Cast its shadow 'cross the gleam !
Every morning brings its counsel,
Every night-time has its dream.
As the trefoil of thy children
Thou hast cherished until now,
So this two-leaved blossom will
Underneath thy nurture grow.

And how great, how glorious !
Even here does nature show ;
When the stem inclines to wither,
Richer do the branches grow.
And the old man, on his death-bed,
Feels his heart with courage rife ;
For with death's dull languor mingled
Is the hope of fresh young life.

2.

A WISH.

Over the Neckar,
Over the Rhine,
Once more to wander
Were gladly mine.

The seven mountains
Once more to see,
Where healthful breezes
Blow soft and free.

Then to the city
I next would roam,
Which won the treasure
That blessed my home.

The house I would search for
The streets about ;
Mother and children
All looking out.

And in the chamber,
The cheerful spot,
Two sweet twin babies
Lie in the cot.

Shade the eyes gently
From too much light;
Ye alone see me
Without affright.

Sleep on calmly,
As children do ;
Soon will be sleeping
Grandfather too.

At Christmas 1873 he sent his daughter the following lines, full of tender feeling :—

Amid feasting and light,
Amid looks of delight,
Rejoice with the gay.
Of thy father no thought
Must with sadness be fraught,
Though vigour and health have fled from him for aye.

In suffering and pain
One joy will remain,
One cup of delight :
'Tis thy children and thee,
In varying degree—
His evening is darkening : ye bless him with light.

Unlamenting may'st thou
Recall even now
The days that are past ;
Those who good have received,
Must in nowise be grieved,
That the dream should not still to eternity last.

Though my memory is all
My legacy small,
Yet I leave it thee here;
Undivided we stay,
And when lonely thy day,
Thou'lt think of thy father, and he will appear.

The last thing that Strauss wrote in verse are a few touching lines, which he addressed, soon after those just quoted to his daughter, on December 29, to a lady highly esteemed by him, the daughter of one of his earliest and nearest friends. He compares his failing life to an expiring light and a fading sound, and he concludes with the words:—

Feeble still, and waning,
Yet bright, and pure, and wise,
Be this expiring glimmer,
This echo as it dies;

and in this he expressed his own innermost feelings. He made no demand upon nature that she should spare him aught that her course and her laws required; all the more, however, he made the demand upon himself, that he should submit to these laws, that he should be enabled to render suffering a matter for moral and mental activity, and should even find benefit in pain. And thankfully he

testified in his letters and poems that he had not failed in so doing, that for the most part bright and even cheerful spirits visited him, and that his present experiences yielded nothing that could perplex him in his kindly optimism. Above all, the course of public affairs proved refreshing and reviving to him. If, as a true son of the people, he had been filled with enthusiasm in the contest with the Gallic foe, and had taken part in it as an author, his joyful concurrence in the contest with the foes of our mental freedom and independence was of course no less assured, and he welcomed with undivided approval the latest progress of affairs in this direction and the writings which appeared in connection with it. The last thing which he wrote, the postscript to a letter of February 4, 1874, was as follows:—'Good luck for to-morrow, the opening of the Diet. These are main matters, compared with which our small ills vanish.'

In this grand spirit he treated his sufferings, and by this treatment he alleviated them; and if friends who visited him parted from him with feelings such as Plato has

depicted at the conclusion of his 'Phædo,' they were justified in entertaining them: in spite of the differences of position and character, they saw before them a philosopher of the present century, treading the last journey with the same composure and courage, the same clearness and freedom of mind, as the old philosopher in Plato. He himself even in his last few days was reading 'Phædo' in the original.

His malady had slowly but steadily increased. On January 4 an experienced surgeon, Simon of Heidelberg, performed an operation long urged by the son, but always deferred by the patient himself, upon the tumour before mentioned. The operation itself was successfully performed without much pain, and without the application of chloroform; but it could not check the progress of the evil. Fever set in, and the increasing weakness made it impossible for Strauss to receive visits; besides his son and his nurse, none but an old friend, Pastor Rapp, residing in Stuttgart, in whose house and society he had formerly passed many cheerful and pleasant hours, kept up his intercourse

with others, although he still continued to occupy himself mentally and could even write letters. Yet even on January 27 he spent his last birthday in the society of his son and son-in-law, tolerable, and even cheerful. On February 7, towards evening, a sudden change for the worse appeared, and the same night his nurse, who against his will was sitting up in the adjoining room, saw herself obliged to summon his son by telegraph. He arrived at four in the morning, and found his father no longer conscious. At six o'clock the sick man fell into a light slumber; towards noon he breathed his last peacefully in the arms of his son, and lay in death as calm as if asleep.

Strauss himself had left directions with regard to his funeral. He wished to be buried simply and without pomp in a pine-wood coffin; all participation of the Church in the ceremony was to be dispensed with, but on the day of the funeral a sum of money was to be given to the local authorities for the poor. On February 10, therefore, he was buried without ringing of bells or the presence of a clergyman, but in the most

suitable manner, and amid the lively sympathy of all far and near.

In addition to his son and his twin grandchildren, numerous friends, especially from Stuttgart, were present; several officers also of the garrison took part in the funeral, and the Stuttgart Polytechnicians sent a deputation. The coffin was covered with fresh laurel, which was lavished on all sides, and an almost boundless procession of friends followed it. Three Stuttgart friends spoke at his grave a few hearty words of remembrance and farewell—Director v. Binder, who for more than fifty years, ever since his admission at Blaubeuren, had been united with him in unclouded friendship; Professor Reuscher, likewise one of his earlier and more intimate friends; and Dr. Ruoff, a relative of the deceased.

Throughout Germany, and far beyond her limits, a feeling of painful interest was excited by the tidings of Strauss's death, as it had been before aroused by those of his illness, amongst all who appreciated mental greatness, whether approving or not of his opinions. It was only a passing discord in this general

feeling when adherents of the Stuttgart pietist party could not forbear performing a scene of ugly inquisitorial malice on the fresh grave-mound of the dead, by setting on foot a feeling of agitation against his friend Binder on account of the words which he had spoken at Strauss's grave, even without accurately knowing their purport, and in raising accusations against him in the public papers, the falsity of which at length truth-loving members of the party felt themselves bound to testify.

Among the sound part of our people, far and wide spread the feeling, a feeling expressed almost universally by the press, that in Strauss had passed away not merely one of their most clever and agreeable authors, and one of their acutest thinkers, but also a scientific character of the highest rank, unwearied in searching after truth, and fearless in expressing his convictions. What he was, however, beyond this in all human relations of life to all those who were more closely connected with him, how much they have lost in him, and how much more they have preserved as an imperishable possession, those even to

whom this happiness has not been permitted will be enabled to form at any rate an approximate idea even by such an imperfect sketch of his life as has here been possible.

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